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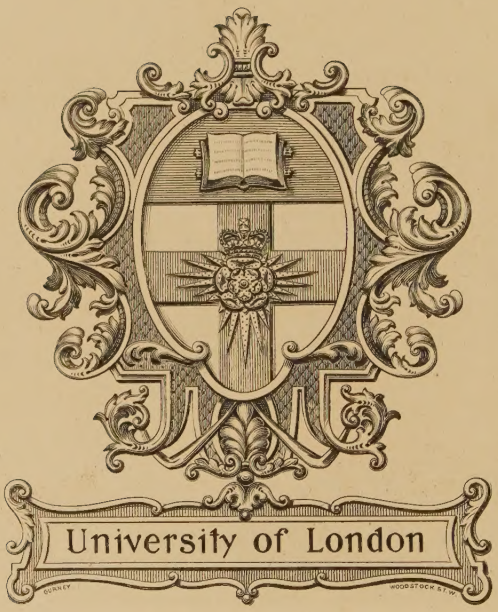

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HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

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52 & 53 VICTORIÆ, 1889.

VOL. CCCXXXIII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE TWENTY-FIRST DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1889,

TO

THE FIFTEENTH DAY OF MARCH, 1889.

First Volume of the Session.

THE HANSARD PUBLISHING UNION, LIMITED,

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1889.

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Chronology of Hansard's Debates.

The PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal: Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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ERRATA.

Feb. 21. Sir JAMES FERGUSSON on page 97, *refer* to Appendix at end of Volume.

Feb. 27. Sir J. W. PEASE, page 509, line 22, *alter* £92,600 *to* £926,000.

Mr. CHANNING, page 494, line 31, *alter* 1887 *to* 1877 ; page 497, line 5, *alter* 1836 *to* 1846 ; line 6, *alter* O'Connell *to* Mr. Stanley.

Mar. 6. Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM, at end of Speech, page 1070, *add*, Amendment proposed, at the end of paragraph 11, to *insert* the words,—

"Humbly to represent to Your Majesty the regret of this House that no reference is made in the Address to the social condition of the Working Classes :—(*Mr. Cuninghame Graham* :)—

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted : "—

Mar. 7. Mr. C. A. V. CONYBEARE, page 1228, lines 35 and 36, *omit* the words—"Neither will I be a toady."

THE MINISTRY

Of the Most Noble the Marquess of SALISBURY, K.G., At the Opening of the Session on the 21st February, 1889.

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Lord Chancellor of Ireland	Right Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
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Solicitor General	Moir T. Stormonth Darling, Esq.

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Lord Chancellor	Right Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
Attorney General	Right Hon. Peter O'Brien, Q.C.
Solicitor General	Dodgson Hamilton Madden, Esq.

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Lord Chamberlain	Right Hon. Earl of Lathom.
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Master of the Buckhounds	Right Hon. Earl of Coventry.
Chief Equerry and Clerk Marshal	Colonel Sir G. A. Maude, K.C.B.
Mistress of the Robes	Her Grace the Duchess of Buccleuch.

ROLL OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN

THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

52° VICTORIÆ, 1889.

MEM.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee, the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

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His Royal Highness ARTHUR WILLIAM PATRICK ALBERT Duke of CONNAUGHT AND STRATHEARN.

His Royal Highness LEOPOLD CHARLES EDWARD GEORGE ALBERT Duke of ALBANY.

His Royal Highness GEORGE WILLIAM FREDERICK CHARLES Duke of CAMBRIDGE.

EDWARD WHITE Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

HARDINGE STANLEY Lord HALSBURY, *Lord High Chancellor.*

WILLIAM Archbishop of YORK.

GATHORNE Viscount CRANBROOK, *Lord President of the Council.*

GEORGE HENRY Earl CADOGAN, *Lord Privy Seal.*

HENRY Duke of NORFOLK, *Earl Marshal of England.*

ARCHIBALD HENRY ALGERNON Duke of SOMERSET.

CHARLES HENRY Duke of RICHMOND.

AUGUSTUS CHARLES LENNOX Duke of GRAFTON.

HENRY CHARLES FITZROY Duke of BEAUFORT.

WILLIAM AMELIUS AUBREY DE VERE Duke of SAINT ALBANS.

GEORGE GODOLPHIN Duke of LEEDS.

FRANCIS CHARLES HASTINGS Duke of BEDFORD.

WILLIAM Duke of DEVONSHIRE.

GEORGE CHARLES Duke of MARLBOROUGH.

JOHN JAMES ROBERT Duke of RUTLAND.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER LOUIS STEPHEN Duke of BRANDON. (*Duke of Hamilton.*)

WILLIAM JOHN ARTHUR CHARLES JAMES Duke of PORTLAND.

WILLIAM DROGO Duke of MANCHESTER.

HENRY PELHAM ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS Duke of NEWCASTLE.

ALGERNON GEORGE Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND.

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HENRY Duke of WELLINGTON.

RICHARD PLANTAGENET CAMPBELL Duke of BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.

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HARRY GEORGE Duke of CLEVELAND.

HUGH LUPUS Duke of WESTMINSTER.

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HENRY CHARLES KEITH Marquess of LANSDOWNE.

JOHN VILLIERS STUART Marquess TOWNSHEND.

ROBERT ARTHUR TALBOT Marquess of SALISBURY.

JOHN ALEXANDER Marquess of BATH.

JAMES Marquess of ABERCORN. (*Duke of Abercorn.*)

HUGH DE GREY Marquess of HERTFORD.

JOHN PATRICK Marquess of BUTE.

WILLIAM ALLEYNE Marquess of EXETER.

WILLIAM Marquess of NORTHAMPTON.

JOHN CHARLES Marquess CAMDEN.

HENRY Marquess of ANGLESEY.

GEORGE HENRY HUGH Marquess of CHOLMONDELEY.

GEORGE WILLIAM THOMAS Marquess of AILESBURY.

FREDERICK WILLIAM JOHN Marquess of BRISTOL.

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WILLIAM Marquess of ABERGAVENNY.

GAVIN Marquess of BREADALBANE.

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GEORGE WILLIAM Earl of COVENTRY.

VICTOR ALBERT GEORGE Earl of JERSEY.

WILLIAM HENRY Earl POULETT.

JOHN FRANCIS ERSKINE Earl of MAR. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Sholto George Watson Earl of Morton. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Claude Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

George Earl of Haddington. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Frederick Henry Earl of Lauderdale (*Elected for Ireland.*)

John Trotter Earl of Lindsay. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

David Stanley William Earl of Airlie. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Alexander Earl of Leven and Melville. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

George John Earl of Northesk. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of Dundonald. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

George William Hamilton Earl of Orkney. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

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Hugh Earl Fortescue.

Henry Howard Molyneux Earl of Carnarvon.

George Henry Earl Cadogan. (*In another Place as Lord Privy Seal.*)

James Howard Earl of Malmesbury.

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Henry John Reuben Earl of Portarlington. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Hugh Earl Annesley. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Cecil Ralph Earl of Wicklow. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

John Henry Reginald Earl of Clonmell. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Somerset Richard Earl of Belmore. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

James Francis Earl of Bandon. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

James Earl of Caledon. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Francis Robert Earl of Rosslyn.

William George Robert Earl of Craven.

William Hillier Earl of Onslow.

Charles Earl of Romney.

Walter John Earl of Chichester.

Seymour John Grey Earl of Wilton.

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HENRY Bishop of WORCESTER.

CHARLES JOHN Bishop of GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.

THOMAS LEGH Bishop of ST. ALBANS.

JAMES Bishop of HEREFORD.

WILLIAM CONNOR Bishop of PETERBOROUGH.

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GEORGE Bishop of SOUTHWELL.

WILLIAM BOYD Bishop of RIPON.

EDWARD Bishop of LINCOLN.

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ALFRED JOSEPH Lord MOWBRAY.

GEORGE MANNERS Lord HASTINGS.

EDWARD SOUTHWELL Lord DE CLIFFORD.

GILBERT HENRY Lord WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY

THOMAS CROSBY WILLIAM Lord DACRE.

CHARLES HENRY ROLLE Lord CLINTON.

ROBERT NATHANIEL CECIL GEORGE Lord ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH.

RAWDON GEORGE GREY Lord GREY DE RUTHYN.

CHARLES EDWARD HASTINGS Lord BOTREAUX. (*Earl of Loudoun.*)

FRANCIS ROBERT Lord CAMOYS.

HENRY Lord BEAUMONT.

HENRY Lord WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE.

HUBERT GEORGE CHARLES Lord VAUX OF HARROWDEN.

RALPH GORDON Lord WENTWORTH.

ALFRED THOMAS TOWNSHEND Lord BRAYE.

ROBERT GEORGE Lord WINDSOR.

WILLIAM HENRY JOHN Lord NORTH.

BEAUCHAMP MOWBRAY Lord ST. JOHN OF BLETSO.

FREDERICK GEORGE Lord HOWARD DE WALDEN.

WILLIAM JOSEPH Lord PETRE.

JOHN FIENNES Lord SAYE AND SELE.

JOHN FRANCIS Lord ARUNDELL OF WARDOUR.

JOHN STUART Lord CLIFTON. (*Earl of Darnley.*)

JOHN BAPTIST JOSEPH Lord DORMER.

GEORGE HENRY Lord TEYNHAM.

AUGUSTUS FREDERICK FITZ-HERBERT Lord STAFFORD.

GEORGE FREDERICK WILLIAM Lord BYRON.

LEWIS HENRY HUGH Lord CLIFFORD OF CHUDLEIGH.

WILLIAM COUTTS Lord ASHFORD.

HORACE COURTENAY GAMMELL Lord FORBES. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

CHARLES WILLIAM Lord SINCLAIR. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

CHARLES Lord BLANTYRE. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

ALEXANDER HUGH Lord BALFOUR OF BURLEY. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

WALTER HUGH Lord POLWARTH. (*Elected for Scotland.*)

RICHARD EDMUND SAINT LAWRENCE Lord BOYLE. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery.*)

GEORGE Lord HAY. (*Earl of Kinnoul.*)

DIGBY WENTWORTH BAYARD Lord MIDDLETON.

FREDERICK GEORGE BRABAZON Lord PONSONBY. (*Earl of Bessborough.*)

ALFRED NATHANIEL HOLDEN Lord SCARSDALE.

GEORGE FLORANCE Lord BOSTON.

CHARLES GEORGE Lord LOVELL AND HOLLAND. (*Earl of Egmont.*)

George William Henry Lord Vernon.
Edward St. Vincent Lord Digby.
George Douglas Lord Sundridge. (*Duke of Argyll.*)
Martin Bladen Lord Hawke.
Henry Thomas Lord Foley.
Arthur de Cardonnel Lord Dinevor.
Thomas Lord Walsingham.
William Lord Bagot.
Charles Henry Lord Southampton.
John Richard Brinsley Lord Grantley.
George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord Rodney.
Henry George Lord Lovaine.
Philip Reginald Lord Somers.
Richard Henry Lord Berwick.
Edward Lennox Lord Sherborne.
John Henry De La Poer Lord Tyrone. (*Marquess of Waterford.*)
Henry Bentinck Lord Carleton. (*Earl of Shannon.*)
Charles Lord Suffield.
Dudley Wilmot Lord Dorchester.
Lloyd Lord Kenyon.
Charles Cornwallis Lord Braybrooke.
George Augustus Hamilton Lord Fisherwick. (*Marquess of Donegall.*)
Henry Charles Lord Gage. (*Viscount Gage.*)
Thomas John Lord Thurlow.
William George Lord Auckland.
Charles George Lord Lyttelton.
Henry George Lord Mendip. (*Viscount Clifden.*)
George Lord Stuart of Castle Stuart. (*Earl of Moray.*)
Alan Plantagenet Lord Stewart of Garlies. (*Earl of Galloway.*)
James George Henry Lord Salterford. (*Earl of Courtown.*)
William Lord Brodrick. (*Viscount Midleton.*)
Frederick Henry William Lord Calthorpe.
Peter Robert Lord Gwydir.
Charles Robert Lord Carrington.
William Henry Lord Bolton.
Thomas Lyttleton Lord Lilford.
Thomas Lord Ribblesdale.
Edward Donough Lord Inchiquin. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
John Thomas William Lord Massy. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Robert Lord Clonbrock. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Charles Mark Lord Headley. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Edward Henry Churchill Lord Crofton. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Hercules Edward Lord Langford. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Dayrolles Blakeney Lord Ventry (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Eyre Challoner Henry Lord Clarina. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Henry Francis Seymour Lord Moore. (*Marquess of Drogheda.*)
John Henry Wellington Graham Lord Loftus. (*Marquess of Ely.*)
William Lord Carysfort. (*Earl of Carysfort.*)
George Ralph Lord Abercromby.
Charles Edmund Lord Ellenborough.
Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord Sandys.
Henry North Lord Sheffield. (*Earl of Sheffield.*)
William Macnaghten Lord Erskine.
George John Lord Monteagle. (*Marquess of Sligo.*)
George Arthur Hastings Lord Granard. (*Earl of Granard.*)
Hungerford Lord Crewe.
——— Lord Gardner.
John Thomas Lord Manners.
John Adrian Louis Lord Hopetoun. (*Earl of Hopetoun.*)
Richard Lord Castlemaine. (*Elected for Ireland.*)
Charles Lord Meldrum. (*Marquess of Huntly.*)
George Frederick Lord Ross. (*Earl of Glasgow.*)
Lowry Egerton Lord Grinstead. (*Earl of Enniskillen.*)
William Hale John Charles Lord Foxford. (*Earl of Limerick.*)
Victor Albert Francis Charles Lord Churchill.
George Robert Canning Lord Harris.
Reginald Charles Edward Lord Colchester.
Schomberg Henry Lord Ker. (*Marquess of Lothian.*)
Henry Francis Lord Minster. (*Marquess Conyngham.*)

James Edward William Theobald Lord Ormonde. (*Marquess of Ormonde.*)

Francis Richard Lord Wemyss. (*Earl of Wemyss.*)

John Strange Lord Clanbrassill. (*Earl of Roden.*)

Thomas Lord Silchester. (*Earl of Longford.*)

Clotworthy John Eyre Lord Oriel. (*Viscount Massereene.*)

Hugh Lord Delamere.

Orlando Watkin Weld Lord Forester.

John William Lord Rayleigh.

Edric Frederic Lord Gifford.

Hubert George Lord Somerhill. (*Marquess of Clanricarde.*)

James Ludovic Lord Wigan. (*Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.*)

Uchter John Mark Lord Ranfurly. (*Earl of Ranfurly.*)

John Byrne Leicester Lord De Tabley.

Charles Stuart Henry Lord Tenterden.

William Conyngham Lord Plunket.

William Henry Ashe Lord Heytesbury.

Archibald Philip Lord Rosebery. (*Earl of Rosebery.*)

Richard James Lord Clanwilliam. (*Earl of Clanwilliam.*)

William Draper Mortimer Lord Wynford.

William Henry Lord Kilmarnock. (*Earl of Erroll.*)

Arthur James Francis Lord Fingall. (*Earl of Fingall.*)

William Philip Lord Sefton. (*Earl of Sefton.*)

Robert Bermingham Lord Clements. (*Earl of Leitrim.*)

Thomas Lord Kenlis. (*Marquess of Headfort.*)

Reginald Lord Chaworth. (*Earl of Meath.*)

Charles Adolphus Lord Dunmore. (*Earl of Dunmore.*)

Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord Poltimore.

Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord Mostyn.

Henry Spencer Lord Templemore.

Valentine Frederick Lord Cloncurry.

John St. Vincent Lord De Saumarez.

Thomas Lord Denman.

William Frederick Lord Abinger.

Philip Lord De L'Isle and Dudley.

Alexander Hugh Lord Ashburton.

Edward George Percy Lord Hatherton.

Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord Worlingham. (*Earl of Gosford.*)

William Frederick Lord Stratheden.

Geoffrey Dominick Augustus Frederick Lord Oranmore and Browne. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Simon Joseph Lord Lovat.

William Bateman Lord Bateman.

James Molyneux Lord Charlemont. (*Earl of Charlemont.*)

Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord Kintore. (*Earl of Kintore.*)

George Ponsonby Lord Lismore. (*Viscount Lismore.*)

Derrick Warner William Lord Rossmore.

Robert Shapland George Julian Lord Carew.

Charles Frederick Ashley Cooper Lord De Mauley.

Arthur Lord Wrottesley.

Charles Douglas Richard Lord Sudeley.

Frederick Henry Paul Lord Methuen.

Henry Edward John Lord Stanley of Alderley.

William Henry Lord Leigh.

Beilby Lord Wenlock.

William Lord Lurgan.

Thomas Spring Lord Monteagle of Brandon.

John Reginald Upton Lord Seaton.

John Manley Arbuthnot Lord Keane.

John Lord Oxenfoord. (*Earl of Stair.*)

Hussey Crespigny Lord Vivian.

Henry William Lord Congleton.

Denis St. George Lord Dunsandle and Clanconal. (*Elected for Ireland.*)

Victor Alexander Lord Elgin. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine.*)

Charles Robert Claude Lord Truro.

Arthur Lord De Freyne.

Edward Burtenshaw Lord Saint Leonards.

George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord Raglan.

Valentine Augustus Lord Kenmare. (*Earl of Kenmare.*)

Henry Lord Belper.

Richard Wogan Lord Talbot de Malahide.

Robert Lord Ebury.

Charles Compton William Lord Chesham.

Frederic Augustus Lord Chelmsford.

John Lord Churston.

Henry Lord Leconfield.

Wilbraham Lord Egerton.

Godfrey Charles Lord Tredegar.

FitzPatrick Henry Lord Lyveden.

Henry Charles Lord Brougham and Vaux.

Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord Kinnaird.

Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord Westbury.

Francis William Fitzhardinge Lord Fitzhardinge.

Luke Lord Annaly.

Robert Offley Ashburton Lord Houghton.

William Lord Romilly.

George Philips Alexander Lord Barrogill. (*Earl of Caithness.*)

James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord Meredyth. (*Lord Athlumney.*)

Windham Thomas Lord Kenry. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl.*)

Charles Stanley Lord Monck. (*Viscount Monck.*)

John Major Lord Hartismere. (*Lord Henniker.*)

Hedworth Hylton Lord Hylton.

George Sholto Gordon Lord Penrhyn.

Gustavus Russell Lord Brancepeth. (*Viscount Boyne.*)

John Henry Lord Kesteven.

Arthur Lord Ormathwaite.

Edward Lord O'Neill.

Robert Cornelis Lord Napier.

Jenico William Joseph Lord Gormanston. (*Viscount Gormanston.*)

John Hamilton Lord Lawrence.

James Plaisted Lord Penzance.

John Lord Dunning. (*Lord Rollo.*)

James Lord Balinhard. (*Earl of Southesk.*)

William Lord Hare. (*Earl of Listowel.*)

Francis Edward Lord Howard of Glossop.

Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord Castletown.

John Emerich Edward Lord Acton.

Thomas Charles Lord Robartes.

Frederick Lord Wolverton.

Algernon William Fulke Lord Greville.

Thomas Towneley Lord O'Hagan.

William Lord Sandhurst.

Frederic Lord Blachford.

Francis Lord Ettrick. (*Lord Napier.*)

James Charles Herbert Welbore Ellis Lord Somerton. (*Earl of Normanton.*)

Henry Austin Lord Aberdare.

James Lord Moncreiff.

John Duke Lord Coleridge.

William Lord Emly.

Chichester Samuel Lord Carlingford. (*Lord Clermont.*)

Thomas Francis Lord Cottesloe.

Edmund Lord Hammond.

John Slaney Lord Hampton.

John Lord Winmarleigh.

Charles Alexander Lord Douglas. (*Earl of Home.*)

Arthur George Maule Lord Ramsay. (*Earl of Dalhousie.*)

John Henry Lord Fermanagh. (*Earl Erne.*)

William Richard Lord Harlech.

Henry Gerard Lord Alington.

John Lord Tollemache.

William Cansfield Lord Gerard.

Colin Lord Blackburn.

Lionel Sackville Lord Sackville.

Charles Bowyer Lord Norton.

Percy Lord Shute. (*Viscount Barrington.*)

William Lord Watson. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

Lawrence Hesketh Lord Haldon.

Ivor Bertie Lord Wimborne.

Arthur Edward Lord Ardilaun.

Alexander Dundas Ross Lord Lamington.

Charles Frederick Lord Donington.

Arthur Edwin Lord Trevor.

Montagu William Lord Rowton.

Edward Hugessen Lord Brabourne.

Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord Ampthill.

William Montagu Lord Tweeddale. (*Marquess of Tweeddale.*)

WILLIAM ULICK TRISTRAM Lord HOWTH. (*Earl of Howth.*)

DONALD JAMES Lord REAY.

HARCOURT Lord DERWENT.

HENRY JAMES Lord HOTHFIELD.

DUDLEY COUTTS Lord TWEEDMOUTH.

GEORGE WILLIAM WILSHERE Lord BRAMWELL.

JOHN DAVID Lord FITZGERALD. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

FREDERICK BEAUCHAMP PAGET Lord ALCESTER.

ALFRED Lord TENNYSON.

JAMES Lord STRATHSPEY. (*Earl of Seafield.*)

JOHN GEORGE Lord MONK BRETTON.

WALTER CHARLES Lord NORTHBOURNE.

ARTHUR SAUNDERS WILLIAM CHARLES FOX Lord SUDLEY. (*Earl of Arran.*)

JOHN ROBERT WILLIAM Lord DE VESCI. (*Viscount de Vesci.*)

MARMADUKE FRANCIS Lord HERRIES.

HARDINGE STANLEY Lord HALSBURY. (*In another Place as Lord High Chancellor.*)

MERVYN EDWARD Lord POWERSCOURT (*In another Place as Viscount Powerscourt.*)

ANTHONY HENLEY Lord NORTHINGTON (*Lord Henley.*)

NATHANIEL MAYER Lord ROTHSCHILD.

EDWARD CHARLES Lord REVELSTOKE.

ROBERT Lord MONKSWELL.

ARTHUR Lord HOBHOUSE.

RALPH ROBERT WHEELER Lord LINGEN.

EDWARD Lord ASHBOURNE.

ROWLAND Lord SAINT OSWALD.

ROBERT JAMES Lord WANTAGE.

WILLIAM BALIOL Lord ESHER.

THOMAS Lord DERAMORE.

HENRY JOHN Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU.

WILLIAM BULLER FULLERTON Lord ELPHINSTONE.

CHARLES JOHN Lord COLVILLE of CULROSS.

FARRER Lord HERSCHELL.

CHARLES HENRY Lord HILLINGDON.

SAMUEL CHARLES Lord HINDLIP.

EDMUND Lord GRIMTHORPE.

RICHARD DE AQUILA Lord STALBRIDGE.

WILLIAM Lord KENSINGTON.

MICHAEL ARTHUR Lord BURTON.

JOHN GLENCAIRN CARTER Lord HAMILTON OF DALZELL.

THOMAS Lord BRASSEY.

HENRY Lord THRING.

FREDERICK ARTHUR Lord STANLEY OF PRESTON.

EDWARD Lord MACNAGHTEN. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary.*)

ROBERT Lord CONNEMARA.

CLAUDE Lord BOWES (*In another place Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn.*)

GEORGE EDWARD MILNES MONCKTON Lord MONCKTON (*Vicount Galway.*)

JOHN Lord SAINT LEVAN.

JAMES MACNAGHTEN Lord MACGHERAMORNE.

WILLIAM GEORGE Lord ARMSTRONG.

GEORGE Lord BASING.

WILLIAM HENRY Lord DE RAMSEY.

HENRY WILLIAM Lord CHEYLESMORE.

JOHN GELLIBRAND Lord ADDINGTON.

JOHN Lord SAVILE.

There is a vacancy in the representation of the Peers for Ireland caused by the death of Lord DUNSANY.

LIST OF THE COMMONS.

THE NAMES OF MEMBERS

RETURNED TO SERVE IN THE TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, SUMMONED TO MEET AT WESTMINSTER THE FIFTH DAY OF AUGUST, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND EIGHTY SIX, AS BY THE SEVERAL RETURNS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CROWN IN CHANCERY APPEARS. CORRECTED TO THE MEETING OF THE PARLIAMENT ON THE 21ST FEBRUARY, 1889.

BEDFORD.

NORTHERN, or BIGGLESWADE DIVISION,
Viscount Baring.

SOUTHERN, or LUTON DIVISION,
Cyril Flower.

BEDFORD BOROUGH.
Samuel Whitbread.

BERKS.

NORTHERN, or ABINGDON DIVISION,
Philip Wroughton.

SOUTHERN, or NEWBURY DIVISION,
William George Mount.

EASTERN, or WOKINGHAM DIVISION,
Sir George Russell, bt.

READING BOROUGH.
Charles Townshend Murdoch.

WINDSOR (NEW) BOROUGH.
Robert Richardson-Gardner.

BUCKS.

NORTHERN, or BUCKINGHAM DIVISION,
Hon. Egerton Hubbard.

MID, or AYLESBURY DIVISION,
Baron Ferdinand James de Rothschild.

SOUTHERN, or WYCOMBE DIVISION,
Viscount Curzon.

CAMBRIDGE.

NORTHERN, or WISBECH DIVISION,
Charles William Selwyn.

WESTERN, or CHESTERTON DIVISION,
Charles Hall.

EASTERN, or NEWMARKET DIVISION,
George Newnes.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY,
Rt. Hon. Henry Cecil Raikes, M.A.
George Gabriel Stokes.

CAMBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Robert Uniacke Penrose Fitzgerald.

CHESTER.

WIRRAL DIVISION,
Edward Thomas Davenant Cotton.

EDDISBURY DIVISION,
Henry James Tollemache.

MACCLESFIELD DIVISION,
William Bromley-Davenport.

CREWE DIVISION,
Walter Stowe Bright McLaren.

NORTHWICH DIVISION,
John Tomlinson Brunner.

ALTRINCHAM DIVISION,
Sir William Cunliffe Brooks, bt.

CHESTER—*cont.*

HYDE DIVISION,
Joseph Watson Sidebotham.

KNUTSFORD DIVISION,
Hon. Alan de Tatton Egerton.

BIRKENHEAD BOROUGH.
Lieut.-General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C B.

CHESTER BOROUGH.
Robert Armstrong Yerburgh.

STOCKPORT BOROUGH.
Louis John Jennings,
Sydney Gedge.

CORNWALL.

WESTERN, or ST. IVES DIVISION,
Thomas Bedford Bolitho.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CAMBORNE DIVISION,
Charles Augustus Vansittart Conybeare.

TRURO DIVISION,
William Bickford Smith.

MID, or ST. AUSTELL DIVISION,
William Alexander M'Arthur.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or BODMIN DIVISION,
Leonard Henry Courtney.

NORTH-EASTERN, or LAUNCESTON DIVISION,
Charles Thomas Dyke Acland.

PENRYN AND FALMOUTH BOROUGH.
William George Cavendish Bentinck.

CUMBERLAND

NORTHERN, or ESKDALE DIVISION,
Robert Andrew Allison.

MID, or PENRITH DIVISION,
James William Lowther.

COCKERMOUTH DIVISION,
Sir Wilfrid Lawson, bt.

WESTERN, or EGREMONT DIVISION,
Lord Muncaster.

CARLISLE BOROUGH.
William Court Gully.

WHITEHAVEN BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. George Augustus Frederick Cavendish Bentinck.

DERBY.

HIGH PEAK DIVISION,
William Sidebottom.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Thomas Dolling Bolton.

CHESTERFIELD DIVISION,
Alfred Barnes.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Lord Edward Cavendish.

MID DIVISION,
James Alfred Jacoby.

ILKESTON DIVISION,
Sir Balthazar Walter Foster.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Henry Wardle.

DERBY BOROUGH.
Thomas Roe,
Rt. Hon. Sir William George Granville Venables Vernon Harcourt, knt.

DEVON.

EASTERN, or HONITON DIVISION,
Sir John Henry Kennaway, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or TIVERTON DIVISION,
Lt.-Col. William Hood Walrond.

NORTHERN, or SOUTH MOLTON DIVISION,
Viscount Lymington.

NORTH-WESTERN, or BARNSTAPLE DIVISION,
George Pitt Lewis.

WESTERN, or TAVISTOCK DIVISION,
Viscount Ebrington.

SOUTHERN, or TOTNES DIVISION,
Francis Bingham Mildmay.

TORQUAY DIVISION,
Richard Mallock.

MID, or ASHBURTON DIVISION,
Charles Seale-Hayne.

DEVONPORT BOROUGH.
Sir John Henry Puleston, knt.
George Edward Price.

EXETER BOROUGH.
Hon. Sir Stafford Northcote, bt., C.B.

PLYMOUTH BOROUGH.
Sir Edward Bates, bt.
Sir Edward George Clarke, knt.

DORSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Edwin Berkeley Portman.

EASTERN DIVISION,
George Hawkesworth Bond.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Charles Joseph Theophilus Hambro.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Henry Richard Farquharson.

DURHAM.

JARROW DIVISION,
Sir Charles Mark Palmer, bt.

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING DIVISION,
Nicholas Wood.

CHESTER-LE-STREET DIVISION,
James Joicey.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Llewellyn Archer Atherley-Jones.

MID DIVISION,
William Crawford.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Lieut.-General Sir Henry Marshman Havelock-Allan, bt., V.C., K.C.B.

BISHOP AUCKLAND DIVISION,
John Mellor Paulton.

BARNARD CASTLE DIVISION,
Sir Joseph Whitwell Pease, Bt.

DARLINGTON BOROUGH.
Theodore Fry.

DURHAM BOROUGH.
Thomas Milvain.

GATESHEAD BOROUGH.
Hon. Walter Henry James.

HARTLEPOOLS (THE) BOROUGH.
Thomas Richardson.

SOUTH SHIELDS BOROUGH.
James Cochran Stevenson.

STOCKTON BOROUGH.
Sir Horace Davey, kt.

SUNDERLAND BOROUGH.
Samuel Storey,
Edward Temperley Gourley.

ESSEX.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or WALTHAMSTOW DIVISION,
William Thomas Makins.

ESSEX—*cont.*

SOUTHERN, or ROMFORD DIVISION,
James Theobald.

WESTERN, or EPPING DIVISION,
Right Hon. Sir Henry John Selwin-Ibbetson, bt.

NORTHERN, or SAFFRON WALDEN DIVISION,
Herbert Colstoun Gardner.

NORTH-EASTERN, or HARWICH DIVISION,
James Round.

EASTERN, or MALDON DIVISION,
Charles Wing Gray.

MID, or CHELMSFORD DIVISION,
William James Beadel.

SOUTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Major Frederick Carne Rasch.

COLCHESTER BOROUGH.
Lord Brooke

WEST HAM BOROUGH.
North Division,
James Forrest Fulton.
South Division,
George Edward Banes.

GLOUCESTER.

MID, or STROUD DIVISION,
George Holloway.

NORTHERN, or TEWKESBURY DIVISION,
Sir John Edward Dorington, bt.

EASTERN, or CIRENCESTER DIVISION,
Arthur Brend Winterbotham.

FOREST OF DEAN DIVISION,
Godfrey Blundell Samuelson.

SOUTHERN, or THORNBURY DIVISION,
Hon. John William Plunkett.

BRISTOL BOROUGH.
West Division,
Rt. hon. Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach, bt.
North Division,
Lewis Fry.
East Division,
Handel Cossham.
South Division,
Lt.-Col. Edward Stock Hill, C.B.

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH.
James Tynte Agg-Gardner.

GLOUCESTER BOROUGH.
Thomas Robinson.

HANTS.

NORTHERN, or BASINGSTOKE DIVISION,
Arthur Frederick Jeffreys.

WESTERN, or ANDOVER DIVISION,
William Wither Bramston Beach.

EASTERN, or PETERSFIELD DIVISION,
Viscount Wolmer.

SOUTHERN, or FAREHAM DIVISION,
Lieut.-Gen. Sir Frederick Wellington John FitzWygram, bt.

NEW FOREST DIVISION,
Francis Compton.

CHRISTCHURCH BOROUGH.
Charles Edward Baring Young.

PORTSMOUTH BOROUGH.
Major.-Gen. Sir William Crossman, K.C.M.G.
Sir Samuel Wilson.

SOUTHAMPTON BOROUGH.
Alfred Giles.
Francis H. Evans.

WINCHESTER BOROUGH.
Richard Moss.

HEREFORD.

NORTHERN, or LEOMINSTER DIVISION,
James Rankin.

SOUTHERN, or ROSS DIVISION,
Michael Biddulph.

HEREFORD BOROUGH.
Sir Joseph Russell Bailey, bt.

HERTFORD.

NORTHERN, or HITCHIN DIVISION,
Robert Dimsdale (Baron of the Russian Empire).

EASTERN, or HERTFORD DIVISION,
Abel Smith.

MID, or ST. ALBAN'S DIVISION,
Viscount Grimston.

WESTERN, or WATFORD DIVISION,
Thomas Frederick Halsey.

HUNTINGDON.

SOUTHERN, or HUNTINGDON DIVISION,
Arthur Hugh Smith Barry.

NORTHERN, or RAMSAY DIVISION,
Hon. Ailwyn Edward Fellowes.

ISLE OF WIGHT.

Sir Richard Everard Webster, knt.

KENT.

WESTERN, or SEVENOAKS DIVISION,
Hon. Charles William Mills.

NORTH-WESTERN, or DARTFORD DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart Dyke, bt.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or TUNBRIDGE DIVISION,
Robert Norton.

MID, or MEDWAY DIVISION,
Hon. John Stewart Gathorne-Hardy.

NORTH-EASTERN, or FAVERSHAM DIVISION,
Hon. Herbert Thomas Knatchbull-Hugessen.

SOUTHERN, or ASHFORD DIVISION,
William Pomfret Pomfret.

EASTERN, or ST. AUGUSTINE'S DIVISION,
Aretas Akers-Douglas.

ISLE OF THANET DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. James Lowther

CANTERBURY BOROUGH.
John Henniker Heaton.

CHATHAM BOROUGH.
Sir John Eldon Gorst, knt.

DEPTFORD BOROUGH.
Charles John Darling.

DOVER BOROUGH.
Major Alexander George Dickson.

GRAVESEND BOROUGH.
John Bazley White.

GREENWICH BOROUGH.
Thomas William Boord.

HYTHE BOROUGH.
Sir Edward William Watkin, bt.

LEWISHAM BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. Viscount Lewisham.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH.
F. S. Wykeham Cornwallis.

ROCHESTER BOROUGH.
Col. Francis Charles Hughes-Hallett.

WOOLWICH BOROUGH.
Col. Edwin Hughes.

LANCASTER.

North Lancashire,

NORTH LONSDALE DIVISION,
William George Ainslie.

LANCASTER DIVISION,
James Williamson.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

BLACKPOOL DIVISION,
Sir Matthew White Ridley, bt.

CHORLEY DIVISION,
Lieut.-Gen. Randle Joseph Feilden.

North-East Lancashire,

DARWEN DIVISION,
Viscount Cranborne.

CLITHEROE DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Sir Ughtred James Kay-Shuttleworth, bt.

ACCRINGTON DIVISION,
Robert Trotter Hermon-Hodge.

ROSSENDALE DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Marquess of Hartington.

South-East Lancashire,

WESTHOUGHTON DIVISION,
Frank Hardcastle.

HEYWOOD DIVISION,
Isaac Hoyle.

MIDDLETON DIVISION,
Thomas Fielden.

RADCLIFFE-CUM-FARNWORTH DIVISION,
Robert Leake.

ECCLES DIVISION,
Hon. Alfred John Francis Egerton.

STRETFORD DIVISION,
John William Maclure.

GORTON DIVISION,
Richard Peacock.

PRESTWICH DIVISION,
Robert Gray Cornish Mowbray.

South-West Lancashire,

SOUTHPORT DIVISION,
Hon. George Nathaniel Curzon.

ORMSKIRK DIVISION,
Arthur Bower Forwood.

BOOTLE DIVISION,
Lieut.-Colonel Thomas Myles Sandys.

WIDNES DIVISION,
Tom Cottingham Edwards-Moss.

NEWTON DIVISION,
Thomas Wodehouse Legh.

INCE DIVISION,
Colonel Henry Blundell - Hollinshead Blundell, C.B.

LEIGH DIVISION,
Caleb Wright.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE BOROUGH.
John Edmund Wentworth Addison.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

BARROW-IN-FURNESS BOROUGH.
William Sproston Caine.

BLACKBURN BOROUGH.
William Coddington.
William Henry Hornby.

BOLTON BOROUGH.
Herbert Shepherd-Cross.
Lieut. Colonel Hon. Francis Charles Bridgeman.

BURNLEY BOROUGH.
John Slagg.

BURY BOROUGH.
Right Hon. Sir Henry James, knt.

LIVERPOOL BOROUGH.

Kirkdale Division,
Sir George Smyth Baden - Powell, K.C.M.G.

Walton Division,
Miles Walker Mattinson.

Everton Division,
Edward Whitley.

West Derby Division,
Hon. William Henry Cross.

Scotland Division,
Thomas Power O'Connor.

Exchange Division,
Ralph Neville.

Abercromby Division,
William Frederick Lawrence.

East Toxteth Division,
Baron Henry de Worms.

West Toxteth Division,
Thomas Bland Royden.

MANCHESTER BOROUGH.

North-West Division,
Sir William Henry Houldsworth, bt.

North Division,
Charles Ernest Schwann.

North-East Division,
Right Hon. Sir James Fergusson, bt.

East Division,
Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour.

South Division,
Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe, knt.

South-West Division,
Jacob Bright.

OLDHAM BOROUGH.
James Mackenzie Maclean.
Elliott Lees.

LANCASTER—*cont.*

PRESTON BOROUGH.
William Edward Murray Tomlinson.
Robert William Hanbury.

ROCHDALE BOROUGH.
Thomas Bayley Potter.

SALFORD BOROUGH.
North Division,
Edward Hardcastle.
West Division,
Lees Knowles.
South Division,
Henry Hoyle Howorth.

ST. HELENS BOROUGH.
Henry Seton-Karr.

STALYBRIDGE BOROUGH.
Tom Harrop Sidebottom.

WARRINGTON BOROUGH.
Sir Gilbert Greenall, bt.

WIGAN BOROUGH.
Francis Sharp Powell.

LEICESTER.

EASTERN, or MELTON DIVISION,
Marquess of Granby.

MID, or LOUGHBOROUGH DIVISION,
Edwin Joseph Lisle March Phillipps de Lisle.

WESTERN, or BOSWORTH DIVISION,
James Ellis.

SOUTHERN, or HARBOROUGH DIVISION,
Thomas Keay Tapling.

LEICESTER BOROUGH.
James Allanson Picton.
Alexander M'Arthur.

LINCOLN.

WEST LINDSEY, or GAINSBORO' DIVISION,
Col. Henry Eyre.

NORTH LINDSEY, or BRIGG DIVISION,
Samuel Danks Waddy.

EAST LINDSEY, or LOUTH DIVISION,
Arthur Raymond Heath.

SOUTH LINDSEY, or HORNCASTLE DIVISION,
Right Hon. Edward Stanhope.

NORTH KESTEVEN, or SLEAFORD DIVISION,
Right Hon. Henry Chaplin.

LINCOLN—*cont.*

SOUTH KESTEVEN, or STAMFORD DIVISION.
John Compton Lawrance.

HOLLAND, or SPALDING DIVISION,
Halley Stewart.

BOSTON BOROUGH.
Henry John Atkinson.

GRANTHAM BOROUGH.
Malcolm Low.

GREAT GRIMSBY BOROUGH.
Right Hon. Edward Heneage.

LINCOLN BOROUGH.
Frederick Harold Kerans.

MIDDLESEX.

ENFIELD DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Viscount Folkestone.

TOTTENHAM DIVISION,
Joseph Howard.

HORNSEY DIVISION,
Henry Charles Stephens.

HARROW DIVISION,
William Ambrose.

EALING DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. Lord George Hamilton.

BRENTFORD DIVISION,
James Bigwood.

UXBRIDGE DIVISION,
Frederick Dixon Dixon-Hartland.

BETHNAL GREEN BOROUGH.
North-East Division,
George Howell.
South-West Division,
Edward Hare Pickersgill.

CHELSEA BOROUGH.
Charles Algernon Whitmore.

FINSBURY BOROUGH.
Holborn Division.
Gainsford Bruce.
Central Division,
Captain Frederick Thomas Penton
East Division,
James Rowlands.

FULHAM BOROUGH.
William Hayes Fisher.

MIDDLESEX—*cont.*

HACKNEY BOROUGH.

North Division,

Major-Gen. Sir Lewis Pelly, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.

Central Division,

Surgeon-General Sir William Guyer Hunter, K.C.M.G.

South Division,

Sir Charles Russell, knt.

HAMMERSMITH BOROUGH.

Major-Gen. Walter Tuckfield Goldsworthy.

HAMPSTEAD BOROUGH.

Edward Brodie Hoare.

ISLINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

George Christopher Trout Bartley.

West Division,

Richard Chamberlain.

East Division,

Cowley Lambert.

South Division,

Sir Albert Kaye Rollit, knt.

KENSINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

Sir Roper Lethbridge, knt.

South Division,

Sir Algernon Borthwick, bt.

LONDON UNIVERSITY.

Sir John Lubbock, bt.

MARYLEBONE BOROUGH.

East Division,

Lord Charles William De La Poer Beresford.

West Division,

Frederick Seager-Hunt.

PADDINGTON BOROUGH.

North Division,

John Aird.

South Division,

Rt. Hon. Lord Randolph Henry Spencer Churchill.

ST. GEORGE, HANOVER SQUARE.

Rt. Hon. George Joachim Goschen.

ST. PANCRAS BOROUGH.

North Division,

Hon. Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Cochrane-Baillie.

East Division,

Robert Grant Webster.

MIDDLESEX—St. Pancras Boro'—*cont.*

West Division,

Harry Lawson Webster Lawson.

South Division,

Sir Julian Goldsmid, bt.

SHOREDITCH BOROUGH.

Hoxton Division,

James Stuart.

Haggerston Division,

William Randal Cremer.

STRAND BOROUGH.

Right Hon. William Henry Smith.

TOWER HAMLETS BOROUGH.

Whitechapel Division,

Samuel Montagu.

St. George Division,

Right Hon. Charles Thomson Ritchie.

Limehouse Division,

Edward Samuel Norris.

Mile End Division,

Spencer Charrington.

Stepney Division,

Frederick Wootton Isaacson.

Bow and Bromley Division,

Sir John Charles R. Colomb, K.C.M.G.

Poplar Division,

Sydney Charles Buxton.

WESTMINSTER BOROUGH.

William Lehmann Ashmead-Bartlett Burdett-Coutts.

LONDON CITY.

Sir Robert Nicholas Fowler, bt.

Thomas Charles Baring.

MONMOUTH.

NORTHERN DIVISION,

Thomas Phillips Price.

WESTERN DIVISION,

Cornelius Marshall Warmington.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,

Col. Hon. Frederick Courtenay Morgan.

MONMOUTH BOROUGH.

Sir George Elliot, bt.

NORFOLK.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,

Lord Henry Bentinck.

NORFOLK—*cont.*

SOUTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
William Amhurst Tyssen-Amherst.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Herbert Hardy Cozens-Hardy.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Sir Edward Birkbeck, bt.

MID DIVISION,
Robert Thornhagh Gurdon.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Francis Taylor.

GREAT YARMOUTH BOROUGH.
Sir Henry Whatley Tyler, knt.

KING'S LYNN BOROUGH.
Alexander Weston Jarvis.

NORWICH BOROUGH.
Jeremiah James Colman.
Samuel Hoare.

NORTHAMPTON.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Lord Burghley.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Francis Allston Channing.

MID DIVISION,
Hon. Charles Robert Spencer.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Sir Rainald Knightley, bt.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH.
Henry Labouchere,
Charles Bradlaugh.

PETERBOROUGH BOROUGH.
Hon. William John Wentworth Fitzwilliam.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

WANSBECK DIVISION,
Charles Fenwick.

TYNESIDE DIVISION,
Wentworth Blackett Beaumont.

HEXHAM DIVISION,
Miles MacInnes.

BERWICK-UPON-TWEED DIVISION,
Sir Edward Grey, bt.

MORPETH BOROUGH.
Thomas Burt.

NORTHUMBERLAND—*cont.*

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE BOROUGH.
Right Hon. John Morley.
James Craig.

TYNEMOUTH BOROUGH.
Richard Sims Donkin.

NOTTINGHAM.

BASSETLAW DIVISION,
William Beckett.

NEWARK DIVISION,
Viscount Newark.

RUSHCLIFFE DIVISION,
John Edward Ellis.

MANSFIELD DIVISION,
Cecil George Savile Foljambe.

NOTTINGHAM BOROUGH.
West Division,
Henry Broadhurst.

East Division,
Arnold Morley.

South Division,
Henry Smith Wright.

OXFORD.

NORTHERN, or BANBURY DIVISION,
Sir Bernhard Samuelson, bt.

MID, or WOODSTOCK DIVISION,
Francis William Maclean.

SOUTHERN, or HENLEY DIVISION.
Hon. Francis Parker.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY.
Rt. Hon. Sir John Robert Mowbray, bt., D.C.L.
John Gilbert Talbot, D.C.L.

OXFORD BOROUGH.
Alexander William Hall.

RUTLAND.
George Henry Finch.

SALOP.

WESTERN, or OSWESTRY DIVISION,
Stanley Leighton.

NORTHERN, or NEWPORT DIVISION,
Col. William Slaney Kenyon-Slaney.

MID, or WELLINGTON DIVISION,
Alexander Hargreaves Brown.

SALOP—*cont.*

SOUTHERN, or LUDLOW DIVISION,
Robert Jasper More.

SHREWSBURY BOROUGH.
James Watson.

SOMERSET.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Evan Henry Llewellyn.

WELLS DIVISION,
Colonel Sir Richard Horner Paget, bt.

FROME DIVISION,
Viscount Weymouth

EASTERN DIVISION,
Henry Hobhouse.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Right Hon. Earl of Cavan.

BRIDGWATER DIVISION,
Edward James Stanley.

WESTERN, or WELLINGTON DIVISION,
Charles Isaac Elton.

BATH BOROUGH.
Edmond Robert Wodehouse,
Col. Robert Peter Laurie, C.B.

TAUNTON BOROUGH.
Hon. Alfred Percy Allsopp.

STAFFORD.

LEEK DIVISION,
Harry Tichborne Davenport.

BURTON DIVISION,
Sydney Evershed.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Hamar Alfred Bass.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Justinian Heathcote Edwards-Heathcote.

LICHFIELD DIVISION,
Sir John Swinburne, bt.

KINGSWINFORD DIVISION,
Alexander Staveley Hill.

HANDSWORTH DIVISION,
Henry Wiggin.

HANLEY BOROUGH.
William Woodall.

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH.
Douglas Harry Coghill.

STAFFORD—*cont.*

STAFFORD BOROUGH.
Thomas Salt.

STOKE-UPON-TRENT BOROUGH.
William Leatham Bright.

WALSALL BOROUGH.
Sir Charles Forster, bt.

WEDNESBURY BOROUGH.
Hon. Philip James Stanhope.

WEST BROMWICH BOROUGH.
James Ernest Spencer.

WOLVERHAMPTON BOROUGH.
West Division,
Sir William Chichele Plowden, K.C.S.I.
East Division,
Rt. Hon. Henry Hartley Fowler.
South Division,
Rt. Hon. Charles Pelham Villiers.

SUFFOLK.

NORTHERN, or LOWESTOFT DIVISION,
Sir Savile Brinton Crossley, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or EYE DIVISION,
Francis Seymour Stevenson.

NORTH-WESTERN, or STOWMARKET DIVISION,
Edward Greene.

SOUTH, or SUDBURY DIVISION,
William Cuthbert Quilter.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or WOODBRIDGE DIVISION,
Col. Robert Hamilton Lloyd Anstruther.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS BOROUGH.
Lord Francis Hervey.

IPSWICH BOROUGH.
Sir Charles Dalrymple, bt.
Lord Elcho.

SURREY.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CHERTSEY DIVISION,
Frederick Alers Hankey.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or GUILFORD DIVISION,
Hon. William St. John Fremantle Brodrick.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or REIGATE DIVISION,
Sir James John Trevor Lawrence, bt.

SURREY—*cont.*

MID, or EPSOM DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. George Cubitt.

KINGSTON DIVISION,
Sir John Whittaker Ellis, bt.

NORTH-EASTERN, or WIMBLEDON DIVISION,
Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor.

BATTERSEA AND CLAPHAM BOROUGH.
Battersea Division.
Octavius Vaughan Morgan.

Clapham Division.
John Saunders Gilliat.

CAMBERWELL BOROUGH.
North Division,
John Richards Kelly.

Peckham Division,
Arthur Anthony Baumann.

Dulwich Division.
John Blundell Maple.

CROYDON BOROUGH.
Hon. Sidney Herbert.

LAMBETH BOROUGH.
North Division,
Lieut.-Gen. Charles Crawfurd Fraser, V.C., C.B.

Kennington Division,
Robert Gent-Davis.

Brixton Division.
Marquess of Carmarthen

Norwood Division,
Thomas Lynn Bristowe.

NEWINGTON BOROUGH.
West Division,
Charles Wallwyn Radcliffe Cooke.

Walworth Division,
Lewis Henry Isaacs.

SOUTHWARK BOROUGH.
West Division,
Richard Knight Causton.

Rotherhithe Division,
Colonel Charles Edward Hamilton.

Bermondsey Division,
Alfred Lafone.

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH.
Henry Kimber.

SUSSEX.

NORTH-WESTERN, or HORSHAM DIVISION,
Colonel Sir Walter Barttelot Barttelot, bt., C.B.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or CHICHESTER DIVISION,
Lord Walter C. Gordon Lennox.

NORTHERN, or EAST GRINSTEAD DIVISION,
Hon. Alfred Erskine Gathorne-Hardy.

MID, or LEWES DIVISION,
Sir Henry Fletcher, bt.

SOUTHERN, or EASTBOURNE DIVISION,
Admiral Edward Field.

EASTERN, or RYE DIVISION,
Arthur Montagu Brookfield.

BRIGHTON BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. Sir William Thackeray Marriott, knt.
Sir William Tindal Robertson, knt.

HASTINGS BOROUGH.
Wilson Noble.

WARWICK.

NORTHERN, or TAMWORTH DIVISION,
Philip Albert Muntz.

NORTH-EASTERN, or NUNEATON DIVISION,
John Stratford Dugdale.

SOUTH-WESTERN, or STRATFORD-ON-AVON DIVISION,
Frederick Townsend.

SOUTH-EASTERN, or RUGBY DIVISION,
Henry Peyton Cobb.

ASTON MANOR BOROUGH.
George Kynoch.

BIRMINGHAM BOROUGH.
Edgbaston Division,
George Dixon.

West Division,
Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain.

Central Division.
Rt. Hon. John Bright.

North Division,
William Kenrick.

East Division,
Right Hon. Henry Matthews.

Bordesley Division,
Jesse Collings.

South Division,
Joseph Powell Williams.

WARWICK—*cont.*

COVENTRY BOROUGH.
William Henry Walter Ballantine.

WARWICK AND LEAMINGTON BOROUGH.
Rt. Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel.

WESTMORELAND.

NORTHERN, or APPLEBY DIVISION,
Hon. William Lowther.

SOUTHERN, or KENDAL DIVISION,
Earl of Bective.

WILTS.

NORTHERN, or CRICKLADE DIVISION,
Mervyn Herbert Nevil Story-Maskelyne.

NORTH-WESTERN, or CHIPPENHAM DIVISION,
Lord Henry Bruce.

WESTERN, or WESTBURY DIVISION,
George Pargiter Fuller.

EASTERN, or DEVIZES DIVISION,
Walter Hume Long.

SOUTHERN, or WILTON DIVISION,
Sir Thomas Fraser Grove, bt.

SALISBURY BOROUGH.
Edward Henry Hulse.

WORCESTER.

WESTERN, or BEWDLEY DIVISION,
Sir Edmund Anthony Harley Lechmere, bt.

SOUTHERN, or EVESHAM DIVISION,
Sir Richard Temple, bt., G.C.S.I.

MID, or DROITWICH DIVISION.
John Corbett.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Benjamin Hingley.

EASTERN DIVISION,
George Woodyatt Hastings.

DUDLEY BOROUGH.
Brooke Robinson.

KIDDERMINSTER BOROUGH.
Augustus Frederick Godson.

WORCESTER BOROUGH.
Hon. George Higginson Allsopp.

YORK.

North Riding,

THIRSK AND MALTON DIVISION,
Colonel Hon. Lewis Payn Dawnay.

RICHMOND DIVISION,
George William Elliot.

CLEVELAND DIVISION,
Henry Fell Pease.

WHITBY DIVISION,
Ernest William Beckett.

East Riding,

HOLDERNESS DIVISION,
Commander George Richard Bethell, R.N.

BUCKROSE DIVISION,
Christopher Sykes.

HOWDENSHIRE DIVISION,
Arthur Duncombe.

West Riding, Northern Part,

SKIPTON DIVISION,
Walter Morrison.

KEIGHLEY DIVISION,
Isaac Holden.

SHIPLEY DIVISION,
Joseph Craven.

SOWERBY DIVISION,
Edward Crossley.

ELLAND DIVISION,
Thomas Wayman.

West Riding, Southern Part,

MORLEY DIVISION,
Charles George Milnes-Gaskell.

NORMANTON DIVISION,
Benjamin Pickard.

COLNE VALLEY DIVISION,
Henry Frederick Beaumont.

HOLMFIRTH DIVISION,
Henry Joseph Wilson.

BARNSLEY DIVISION,
Courtney Stanhope Kenny.

HALLAMSHIRE DIVISION,
Sir Frederick Thorpe Mappin, bt.

ROTHERHAM DIVISION,
Arthur Herbert Dyke Acland.

DONCASTER DIVISION,
Hon. W. Henry W. Fitzwilliam.

YORK—*cont.*

West Riding, Eastern Part,

RIPON DIVISION,
John Lloyd Wharton.

OTLEY DIVISION,
John Barran.

BARKSTON ASH DIVISION,
Colonel Robert Gunter.

OSGOLDCROSS DIVISION,
John Austin.

PUDSEY DIVISION,
Briggs Priestley.

SPEN VALLEY DIVISION,
Joseph Woodhead.

BRADFORD BOROUGH.

West Division,
Alfred Illingworth.

Central Division,
Right Hon. John George Shaw Lefevre.

East Division,
Henry Byron Reed.

DEWSBURY BOROUGH.
Mark Oldroyd.

HALIFAX BOROUGH.
Thomas Shaw.
Rt. Hon. James Stansfeld.

HUDDERSFIELD BOROUGH.
William Summers.

KINGSTON-UPON-HULL BOROUGH.

East Division,
Frederick Brent Grotrian.

Central Division,
Henry Seymour King.

West Division,
Charles Henry Wilson.

LEEDS BOROUGH.

North Division,
William Lawies Jackson.

Central Division,
Gerald William Balfour.

East Division,
John Lawrence Gane.

West Division,
Herbert John Gladstone.

South Division,
Rt. Hon. Sir Lyon Playfair, K.C.B.

MIDDLESBOROUGH BOROUGH.
Isaac Wilson.

YORK—*cont.*

PONTEFRACT BOROUGH.
Hon. Rowland Winn.

SCARBOROUGH BOROUGH.
Joshua Rowntree.

SHEFFIELD BOROUGH.

Attercliffe Division,
Hon. Bernard John Seymour Coleridge.

Brightside Division,
Rt. Hon. Anthony John Mundella.

Central Division,
Charles Edward Howard Vincent, C.B.

Hallam Division,
Charles Beilby Stuart-Wortley.

Ecclesall Division,
Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett.

WAKEFIELD BOROUGH.
Sir Edward Green, bt.

YORK BOROUGH.
Alfred Edward Pease.
Frank Lockwood.

WALES.

ANGLESEA.
Thomas Lewis.

BRECKNOCK.
William Fuller Maitland.

CARDIGAN.
William Bowen Rowlands.

CARMARTHEN.

EASTERN DIVISION,
David Pugh.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Walter Rice Howell Powell.

CARMARTHEN BOROUGH.
Sir Emile Algernon Arthur Keppel Stepney-Cowell, bt.

CARNARVON.

SOUTHERN OR EIFION DIVISION,
John Bryn Roberts.

NORTHERN OR ARFON DIVISION,
William Rathbone.

CARNARVON BOROUGH.
Edmund Swetenham.

DENBIGH.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Rt. Hon. George Osborne Morgan.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Colonel William Cornwallis West.

DENBIGH BOROUGH.
Hon. George Thomas Kenyon.

FLINT.
Samuel Smith.

FLINT BOROUGH.
John Roberts.

GLAMORGAN.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Alfred Thomas.

RHONDDA DIVISION,
William Abraham.

WESTERN OR GOWER DIVISION,
David Randell.

MID DIVISION,
Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Arthur John Williams.

CARDIFF BOROUGH.
Sir Edward James Reed, K.C.B.

MERTHYR TYDVIL BOROUGH.
David Alfred Thomas.
Pritchard Morgan.

SWANSEA BOROUGH.
Swansea Town,
Lewis Llewellyn Dillwyn.

Swansea District,
Sir Henry Hussey Vivian, bt.

MERIONETH.
Thomas Edward Ellis.

MONTGOMERY.
Stuart Rendel.

MONTGOMERY BOROUGH.
Hon. Frederick Stephen Archibald Hanbury-Tracy.

PEMBROKE.
William Davies.

PEMBROKE AND HAVERFORDWEST BOROUGH.
Adm. Richard Charles Mayne, C.B.

RADNOR.
Hon. Arthur Henry John Walsh.

SCOTLAND.

ABERDEEN.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Peter Esslemont.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Robert Farquharson, M.D.

ABERDEEN BURGH.
North Division.
William Alexander Hunter.

South Division,
James Bryce.

ARGYLL.
Colonel John Wingfield Malcolm.

AYR.

NORTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Hugh Frederick Hislop Elliot.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
Hon. Greville Richard Vernon.

AYR DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Sinclair.

KILMARNOCK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Stephen Williamson.

BANFF.
Robert William Duff.

BERWICK.
Right Hon. Edward Marjoribanks.

BUTE.
Right Hon. James Patrick Bannerman Robertson.

CAITHNESS.
Gavin Brown Clark.

WICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Macdonald Cameron.

CLACKMANNAN AND KINROSS.
Rt. Hon. John Blair Balfour.

DUMBARTON.
Sir Archibald Orr Ewing, bt.

DUMFRIES.
Sir Robert Jardine, bt.

DUMFRIES DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Robert Threshie Reid.

EDINBURGH (MID LOTHIAN).
Rt. Hon. William Ewart Gladstone.

EDINBURGH—*cont.*

EDINBURGH BURGH.

East Division,
Robert Wallace.

West Division,
Thomas Ryburn Buchanan.

Central Division,
William McEwan.

South Division,
Rt. Hon. Hugh Culling Eardley Childers.

EDINBURGH AND ST. ANDREW'S UNIVERSITIES.
Moir T. Stormonth Darling.

LEITH DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Ronal Crawfurd Munro Ferguson.

ELGIN AND NAIRN.
Charles Henry Anderson.

ELGIN DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Alexander Asher.

FIFE.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Herbert Henry Asquith.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Hon. Robert Preston Bruce.

KIRKCALDY DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Sir George Campbell, knt., K.G.S.I.

ST. ANDREW'S DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Henry Torrens Anstruther.

FORFAR.
James William Barclay.

DUNDEE BURGH.
Edmund Robertson,
Joseph F. Bottomley Firth.

MONTROSE DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
John Shiress Will.

HADDINGTON.
Richard Burdon Haldane.

INVERNESS.
Charles Fraser Mackintosh.

INVERNESS DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Robert Bannatyne Finlay.

KINCARDINE.
General Sir George Balfour, K.C.B.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT.
Mark John Stewart.

LANARK.

GOVAN DIVISION,
John Wilson.

PARTICK DIVISION,
Alexander Craig Sellar.

NORTH-WESTERN DIVISION,
Robert Bontine Cunningham Graham.

NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION,
Donald Crawford.

MID DIVISION,
John Wynford Philipps.

SOUTHERN DIVISION,
James Henry Cecil Hozier.

GLASGOW BURGH.

Bridgeton Division,
Rt. Hon. Sir George Otto Trevelyan, bt.

Camlachie Division,
Hugh Watt.

St. Rollox Division,
James Caldwell.

Central Division,
John George Alexander Baird.

College Division,
Charles Cameron, M.D., LL.D.

Tradeston Division,
Archibald Cameron Corbett.

Blackfriars and Hutchesontown Division,
Andrew Dryburgh Provand.

GLASGOW AND ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES
James Alexander Campbell, LL.D.

LINLITHGOW.
Peter McLagan.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.
Leonard Lyell.

PEEBLES AND SELKIRK
Walter Thorburn.

PERTH.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Sir John George Smyth Kinloch, Bart.

WESTERN DIVISION
Sir Donald Currie, K.C.M.G

PERTH BURGH
Charles Stuart Parker.

RENFREW.

EASTERN DIVISION,
Michael Hugh Shaw Stewart.

WESTERN DIVISION,
Sir Archibald Campbell Campbell, bt.

GREENOCK BURGH.
Thomas Sutherland.

PAISLEY BURGH.
William Boyle Barbour.

ROSS AND CROMARTY.
Dr. Roderick Macdonald.

ROXBURGH.
Hon. Arthur Ralph Douglas Elliot.

HAWICK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Alexander Laing Brown.

STIRLING.
Joseph Cheney Bolton.

FALKIRK DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
William Pirrie Sinclair.

STIRLING DISTRICT OF BURGHS.
Right Hon. Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

SUTHERLAND.
Angus Sutherland.

WIGTON.
Sir Herbert Eustace Maxwell, bt.

IRELAND.

ANTRIM.

NORTH ANTRIM DIVISION,
Sir Charles Edward Lewis, bt.

MID ANTRIM DIVISION,
Hon. Robert Torrens O'Neill.

EAST ANTRIM DIVISION,
Captain James Martin M'Calmont.

SOUTH ANTRIM DIVISION,
William Grey Ellison Macartney.

BELFAST BOROUGH.

East Belfast Division,
Edward Samuel Wesley de Cobain.

South Belfast Division,
William Johnston.

West Belfast Division,
Thomas Sexton.

North Belfast Division,
Sir William Ewart, bt.

ARMAGH.

NORTH ARMAGH DIVISION,
Colonel Edward James Saunderson.

MID ARMAGH DIVISION,
Sir James Porter Corry, bt.

SOUTH ARMAGH DIVISION,
Alexander Blane.

CARLOW.
James Patrick O'Gorman (The O'Gorman Mahon)

CAVAN.

WEST CAVAN DIVISION,
Joseph Gillis Biggar.

EAST CAVAN DIVISION,
Thomas O'Hanlon.

CLARE.

EAST CLARE DIVISION,
Joseph Richard Cox.

WEST CLARE DIVISION,
Jeremiah Jordan.

CORK.

NORTH CORK DIVISION,
James Christopher Flynn.

NORTH-EAST CORK DIVISION,
William O'Brien.

MID CORK DIVISION,
Dr. Charles Kearns Deane Tanner.

EAST CORK DIVISION,
William John Lane.

WEST CORK DIVISION,
James Gilhooly.

SOUTH CORK DIVISION,
Joseph Edward Kenny.

SOUTH-EAST CORK DIVISION,
John Hooper.

CORK CITY.
Charles Stewart Parnell.
Maurice Healy.

DONEGAL.

NORTH DONEGAL DIVISION,
James Edward O'Doherty.

WEST DONEGAL DIVISION,
Patrick O'Hea.

EAST DONEGAL DIVISION,
Arthur O'Connor.

SOUTH DONEGAL DIVISION,
John Gordon Swift Mac Neill

DOWN.

NORTH DOWN DIVISION,
Colonel Thomas Waring.

EAST DOWN DIVISION,
Richard William Blackwood Ker.

WEST DOWN DIVISION,
Right Hon. Lord Arthur Hill.

SOUTH DOWN DIVISION,
Michael McCartan.

NEWRY BOROUGH.
Justin Huntly McCarthy.

DUBLIN.

NORTH DURLIN DIVISION,
John Joseph Clancy, M.A.

SOUTH DUBLIN DIVISION,
Sir Thomas Henry Grattan Esmonde, bt.

DUBLIN CITY.

College Green Division,
Timothy Daniel Sullivan.

Dublin Harbour Division,
Timothy Charles Harrington.

St. Stephen's Green Division,
Thomas Alexander Dickson.

St. Patrick's Division,
William Martin Murphy.

DUBLIN UNIVERSITY.
Rt. Hon. David Robert Plunket, LL.D.
Dodgson Hamilton Madden.

FERMANAGH.

NORTH FERMANAGH DIVISION,
William Hoey Kearney Redmond.

SOUTH FERMANAGH DIVISION,
Henry Campbell.

GALWAY.

CONNEMARA DIVISION,
Patrick James Foley.

NORTH GALWAY DIVISION,
Colonel John Philip Nolan.

EAST GALWAY DIVISION,
Mathew Harris.

SOUTH GALWAY DIVISION,
David Sheehy.

GALWAY TOWN.
John Pinkerton.

KERRY.

NORTH KERRY DIVISION,
John Stack.

WEST KERRY DIVISION,
Edward Harrington.

SOUTH KERRY DIVISION,
Denis Kilbride.

EAST KERRY DIVISION,
Jeremiah Daniel Sheehan.

KILDARE.

NORTH KILDARE DIVISION,
James Laurence Carew.

SOUTH KILDARE DIVISION,
James Leahy.

KILKENNY.

NORTH KILKENNY DIVISION,
Edward P. Mulhallen Marum.

SOUTH KILKENNY DIVISION,
Patrick Alexander Chance.

KILKENNY CITY.
Thomas Quinn.

KING'S COUNTY.

BIRR DIVISION,
Bernard Charles Molloy.

TULLAMORE DIVISION,
Dr. Joseph Francis Fox.

LEITRIM.

NORTH LEITRIM DIVISION,
Michael Conway.

SOUTH LEITRIM DIVISION,
Luke Patrick Hayden.

LIMERICK.

WEST LIMERICK DIVISION,
William Abraham.

EAST LIMERICK DIVISION,
John Finucane.

LIMERICK CITY.
Francis A. O'Keefe.

LONDONDERRY.

NORTH DERRY DIVISION,
Henry Lyle Mulholland.

SOUTH DERRY DIVISION,
Thomas Lea.

LONDONDERRY CITY.
Justin M'Carthy.

LONGFORD.

North Longford Division,
Timothy Michael Healy.

South Longford Division,
James J. Fitzgerald.

LOUTH.

North Louth Division,
Joseph Nolan.

South Louth Division,
Thomas Patrick Gill.

MAYO.

North Mayo Division,
Daniel Crilly.

West Mayo Division,
John Deasy.

East Mayo Division,
John Dillon.

South Mayo Division,
James Frederick Xavier O'Brien.

MEATH.

North Meath Division,
Pierce Mahony.

South Meath Division,
Edward Sheil.

MONAGHAN.

North Monaghan Division,
Patrick O'Brien.

South Monaghan Division,
Sir Joseph Neale McKenna, knt.

QUEEN'S COUNTY.

Ossory Division,
William Archibald Macdonald.

Leix Division,
Richard Lalor.

ROSCOMMON.

North Roscommon Division,
James J. O'Kelly.

South Roscommon Division,
Andrew Commins.

SLIGO.

North Sligo Division,
Peter McDonald.

South Sligo Division,
Edmund Leamy.

TIPPERARY.

North Tipperary Division,
Patrick Joseph O'Brien.

Mid Tipperary Division,
Thomas Mayne.

South Tipperary Division,
John O'Connor.

East Tipperary Division,
Thomas Joseph Condon.

TYRONE.

North Tyrone Division,
Lord Ernest Hamilton.

Mid Tyrone Division,
Matthew Joseph Kenny.

East Tyrone Division,
William James Reynolds.

South Tyrone Division,
Thomas Wallace Russell.

WATERFORD.

West Waterford Division,
Jasper Douglas Pyne.

East Waterford Division,
Patrick Joseph Power.

WATERFORD CITY.
Richard Power.

WESTMEATH.

North Westmeath Division,
James Tuite.

South Westmeath Division,
Donal Sullivan.

WEXFORD.

North Wexford Division,
John Edward Redmond.

South Wexford Division,
John Barry.

WICKLOW.

West Wicklow Division,
Garrett Michael Byrne.

East Wicklow Division,
William Joseph Corbet.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND* APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

No. 1.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 1.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 21*st February*, 1889.

THE PARLIAMENT, which had been prorogued successively from the 24th day of December, 1888, to the 31st day of January, 1889; thence to the 21st day of February, 1889, met this day for the despatch of Public Business.

The Session was opened by Commission.

THE HOUSE OF PEERS being met;

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House,

"That Her Majesty, not thinking it fit to be personally present here this day, has been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the Great Seal, in order to the opening and holding of this Parliament."

Then Five of the LORDS COMMISSIONERS—namely, The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury); VISCOUNT CRANBROOK, The EARL OF KINTORE, The EARL OF LATHOM, and VISCOUNT CROSS—being in their Robes, and seated on a Form placed between the Throne and the Woolsack, commanded the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to let the COMMONS know "The Lords Commissioners desire their immediate Attendance in this House, to hear the Commission read."

Who being at the Bar, with their Speaker:—The Commission was read by the Clerk:—Then

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR delivered HER MAJESTY'S SPEECH to both Houses of Parliament, as follows:—

"*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

"During the brief period that has elapsed since the close of the last Session, nothing has taken place to affect the cordial relations which exist between Myself and other Powers.

"The operations which had been successfully completed in Egypt a few days

before the last Prorogation have effected the object for which they were undertaken, and I see no ground for apprehending the renewal of disturbance in the neighbourhood of Suakim. The negotiations which I had directed to be opened with the Rulers of Thibet for the purpose of preventing encroachment on my rights over the territory of Sikkim have not as yet been brought to a favourable conclusion; but I hope that further Military operations will not be necessary.

"I have consented to take part in a Conference with Germany and the United States at Berlin upon the affairs of Samoa, in continuation of that which was recently assembled at Washington.

"*Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

"The Estimates for the Public Service of the year will be laid before you. The unceasing expenditure upon warlike preparation which has been incurred by other European nations has rendered necessary an increase in the precautions which have hitherto been taken for the safety of our shores and our commerce. The counsels by which other Powers are guided, and which dispose of their vast Forces, are at present uniformly friendly to this Country; but I have no right to assume that this condition is necessarily secure from the possibility of change.

"*My Lords, and Gentlemen,*

"Some portions of the Bill which was presented to you last year for amending the Local Government of England and Wales were laid aside in consequence of the pressure upon the time of Parliament; and from the same cause it was found to be impossible to enter upon the question of Local Government for Scotland. Bills dealing with these matters will be laid before you.

"Your early attention will be asked to measures for developing the material resources of Ireland and for amending the constitution of the various tribunals which have special jurisdiction over real property in that country. The Statutes which you have recently passed for the restoration of order and confidence in Ireland have already been attended with salutary results.

"Legislative provision will be necessary for executing the Convention into which I have entered for the suppression of bounties on the exportation of sugar; and also for completing the conversion of the Three per Cent. Annuities. The state of the gold coinage has for some years past been the subject of legitimate complaint. A measure for restoring it to a satisfactory condition will be laid before you.

"Though the Commission which I appointed to inquire into the Civil Establishments of the United Kingdom has not yet completed its labours, it has already made a Report of much value, and proposals for legislation arising out of that Report will be submitted to you.

"Several subjects which I have commended to your care in previous years, but which the increasing burden of your duties has shut out from consideration, will be submitted to you again. In this number will be included measures relating to tithes, for the regulation of the Universities of Scotland, for determining the liability of employers in the case of accidents, for establishing a Department of Agriculture, for cheapening the transfer of land, and for remedying abuses attaching to Joint Stock Companies formed under limited liability.

"I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may be with you in the discharge of your arduous duties."

Then the Commons withdrew.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

PRAYERS.

ROLL OF THE LORDS—Garter King of Arms attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the Fourth Session of the Twenty-fourth Parliament of the United Kingdom: The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR IRELAND.

Writs and Returns electing the Lord Clarina a Representative Peer for Ireland in the room of the late Earl of Lucan, deceased, with the Certificate of the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland annexed thereto, delivered (on oath), and Certificate read.

SAT FIRST.

Gilbert Henry Lord Willoughby de Eresby, after the death of his mother, in whose favour Her Majesty was pleased to terminate the abeyance of the Peerage consequent on the death of Alberic Lord Willoughby de Eresby without male heirs in 1870.

NEW PEER.

The Right Honourable Frederick Temple, Earl of Dufferin, G.C.B., K.P., G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.I.E., having been created Earl of Ava in the province of Burma, and Marquess of Dufferin and Ava in the County of Down and in Burma aforesaid was (in the usual manner) introduced.

The Lord Bishop of Ripon—Took the Oath for the first time.

The Lord Bishop of Lincoln—Took the Oath for the first time.

REPRESENTATIVE PEER FOR SCOTLAND.

The Clerk of the Parliaments delivered a Certificate of the Clerk of the Crown that the Earl of Lauderdale had been elected a representative Peer for Scotland in the room of the Earl of Mar and Kellie: Certificate read.

The Earl of Lauderdale—Took the oath.

SELECT VESTRIES—Bill, *pro formâ*, read 1ª.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH

The QUEEN'S SPEECH reported by the LORD CHANCELLOR.

The EARL OF LONDESBOROUGH (who wore the uniform of Honorary Colonel of the 1st York Rifles): My Lords, I rise to move an Address thanking Her Majesty for Her gracious Speech. I do so with diffidence, relying upon the indulgence always extended by your Lordships to those who address your Lordships' House for the first time.

The subject with which I will first deal is one that engrosses all our minds, and that is, the state of Ireland. I think it will be a great comfort to the whole of this country to read that the measures that have been passed in this Parliament have already been of such salutary effect in Ireland, and that Her Majesty's Government intend to produce further measures which will conduce to the comfort of that country. It is not for me to waste your time by entering upon the subject of Home Rule; but I do think that the most eloquent Unionist could not possibly bring forward a more forcible argument against Home Rule than the horrible and atrocious murder of Inspector Martin. I think Home Rulers themselves must feel this, because, although in different parts of the country they endeavour to stir up indignation (not with very great success, I must say) on account of the imprisonment of Mr. O'Brien, yet they pass over this dreadful murder. And I think one may mention the very last speech on this subject of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Rosebery), who alluded to it as a "death." I should call it a most horrible and atrocious murder, and a disgrace to the whole country. It reflects disgrace upon those who brought it about in that sort of way, and also on the whole country, and will continue to do so on the whole country until the state of things is put an end to. The noble Lord appears to think that one of the principals in that dreadful affair was what he called a "peaceable priest." I do not know how the noble Lord found out that he was a peaceable priest, because certainly his public form

does not show it. Some time ago he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for vindicating the Plan of Campaign; and, altogether, I think he can hardly be described as a peaceable priest. At any rate, the noble Lord appears to think that the most disgraceful thing was that this man should be arrested on his return from a service at church. This priest did not act upon the example that was set him by his Master some 1900 years ago. I would ask you how it is possible that we should wish to entrust the lives and liberties of our fellow subjects to men like these. We Englishmen do not wish to send men where we would not go ourselves; and who would like to be at the mercy of these atrocious ruffians? I think even the liberty of these men themselves would not be safe. There is Mr. O'Brien. He gave the advice which tended to this murder; he advised them to bring their sticks with them—that with their sticks they would be a match for the constables. They did bring their sticks, and the deplorable result we have seen. But this is not all. A letter written by Mr. Russell has appeared in the *Times*. We have seen no contradiction of it; and it appears that in the month of August Mr. O'Brien wrote saying that it was most necessary to show Mr. Balfour that his troubles in Ireland were only beginning. This was in the month of August; in the month of September, directly after that, the outrages commenced; in October there were six, in November four, and in December six, showing the great effect of these meetings. Is it to be wondered at that Her Majesty's Government afterwards directed that he should be prosecuted? Considering all that he had said with respect to the treatment of land grabbers, and considering how all these people have been murdered, I think Her Majesty's Government would have acted in the most disgraceful way if they had not taken notice of these speeches of Mr. O'Brien. But some advocates of Home Rule appear to think that because a man is well brought up he ought to be treated in a different way from one who has not had his advantages. I think it is just the reverse. Because a man is well brought up he ought to know how to behave, and he ought not to encourage acts of this kind. When the meetings were proclaimed the outrages diminished. I feel certain that if Her Majesty's Government pursue the course they have taken, of administering justice with firmness, in course of time these outrages will cease. As a proof of that I may point to the improvement in the deposits in Savings Banks. I say that the outrages have diminished, and at the present moment the only great cause of complaint that Home Rulers can bring is this imprisonment of Mr. O'Brien, and that instead of being taken to prison in a first-class carriage, he was removed in a second. I hope Her Majesty's Government will continue to administer justice in the same firm way that they have done hitherto.

The next most important subject is the announcement that Her Majesty's Government intend to do something towards the National Defences. Nothing would produce more fearful results to this country than a general war happening and this country being unprepared; and I feel sure that Her Majesty's Government will not appeal in vain to the patriotism of the country for its defence. We must remember that this country is peculiarly situated, and that we are dependent, not only for our comforts and the luxuries of life, but also for the mere necessaries of life, upon foreign countries; and it is therefore necessary, not only that our coasts should be defended, but that also the ocean highways should be made safe for our vessels. Our coasts are inhabited by the finest sea-going population in the world, men who hold their lives in their hands when they go out, and who are at all times ready to risk their lives in defending the State and the safety of their wives and families. When they do this I think it is necessary that they should be able to trust the ships they have to man, and the guns they have to fire. It is only fair that the whole of the country which enjoys this safety should provide these things for its defence. There is another thing that we must remember, and that is that the money will not altogether be spent in vain, but it will be spent in this country for the benefit of the whole of the population.

I think the country may be congratulated upon having at the head of the Government the noble Marquis, by whom our foreign relations are so satisfactorily controlled, and if the mea-

sures that are promised by the Government are only considered on their merits, and not opposed merely because they are brought in by a Conservative Government, I think they will certainly be passed, with very great advantage to the country, and for the public benefit. My Lords, I will conclude by moving that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, thanking Her Majesty for Her Majesty's most Gracious Speech from the Throne, as follows :—

"MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to your Majesty for the Most Gracious Speech which your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament:

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for the information that during the brief period that has elapsed since the close of the last Session nothing has taken place to affect the cordial relations which exist between Your Majesty and other Powers.

"We learn with satisfaction that the operations which had been successfully completed in Egypt a few days before the last Prorogation, have effected the object for which they were undertaken, and that Your Majesty sees no ground for apprehending the renewal o disturbance in the neighbourhood of Suakin.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that the negotiations which Your Majesty had directed to be opened with the Rulers of Thibe for the purpose of preventing encroachment on Your Majesty's rights over the territory of Sikkim have not as yet been brought to a favourable conclusion, but that Your Majesty hopes that further military operations will not be necessary.

"We humbly thank your Majesty for informing us that your Majesty has consented to take part in a Conference with Germany and the United States at Berlin upon the affairs of Samoa, in continuation of that which was recently assembled at Washington.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that some portions of the Bill which was presented to us last year for amending the Local Government of England and Wales were laid aside in consequence of the pressure upon the time of Parliament, and that from the same cause it was found to be impossible to enter upon the question of Local Government for Scotland; and that Bills dealing with these matters will be laid before us.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that our attention will be asked to measures for developing the material resources of Ireland, and for amending the constitution of the various tribunals which have special jurisdiction over real property in that country. We learn with satisfaction that the Statutes which we have recently passed for the restoration of order and confidence in Ireland have already been attended with salutary results.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that legislative provision will be necessary for executing the Convention into which Your Majesty has entered for the suppression of bounties on the exportation of sugar, and also for completing the conversion of the Three per Cent. Annuities; that the state of the gold coinage has for some years past been the subject of legitimate complaint, and that a measure for restoring it to a satisfactory condition will be laid before us.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that though the Commission which Your Majesty appointed to inquire into the Civil Establishments of the United Kingdom has not yet completed its labours, it has already made a Report of much value, and that proposals for legislation arising out of that Report will be submitted to us.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that several subjects which Your Majesty commended to our care in previous years, but which the increasing burden of our duties has shut out from consideration, will be submitted to us again, that in this number will be included Measures relating to tithes, for the regulation of the Universities of Scotland, for determining the liability of employers in the case of accidents, for establishing a Department of Agriculture, for cheapening the Transfer of Land, and for remedying abuses attaching to Joint Stock Companies formed under limited liability.

"We humbly assure your Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Your Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the Measures which may be submitted to us; and we earnestly trust tha t with regard to these and all other matters pertaining to our functions the keeping and guidance of Almighty God may be vouchsafed to us."

LORD PENRHYN (who was attired in the uniform of a Deputy Lieutenant): My Lords, I beg to second the adoption of the Address to Her Majesty. I must

ask your Lordships' consideration for any shortcomings which there may be in the performance of the duty which I have the honour of being entrusted with. I trust also that I may not infringe any of the Rules of this House in my attempt to deal with some of the topics which have been mentioned.

My Lords, we are informed that the relations existing between this country and Foreign Powers are on terms of cordiality. I think that is a proof of the ability and tact with which matters relating to Foreign Affairs continue to be conducted by Her Majesty's Government. It is highly satisfactory to know that the military operations conducted in the neighbourhood of Suakim have been so successful that the enemy have been obliged to withdraw. It is also to be hoped that the diplomatic representations made to the Rulers of Thibet will settle the difficulty about Sikkim, and will obviate the necessity of resorting to arms.

I hope that the Conference which is to take place in Berlin on the Affairs of Samoa will bring about an amicable settlement of that rather triangular difficulty which is shared by this country, Germany, and the United States. I am sure that a solution of that question will be acceptable to your Lordships.

I think that in the consideration of Home Affairs, the subject of National Defence deservedly takes precedence in order of importance. The paragraph in the Speech from the Throne which announces that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take additional steps for the defence of our shores and commerce will, I am sure, be read with gratification by all who care about the security of Her Majesty's Dominions. I think I may say also that the prospect of additional strength being given to the Navy is welcome. In my opinion our Navy ought to be conspicuous for its strength, and although the putting of our defences upon a better footing will involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, I sincerely hope that those who are responsible for our Naval Administration will not allow any motive of parsimony to weigh with them. Of course it is possible that an addition to the strength of our war vessels will entail a heavy outlay, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer asks for the means I hope he will have no difficulty about that.

My Lords, the subject of the Local Government Bill, and the extension of it to Scotland next requires some attention, and with your permission I should like to say a word or two upon how the matter stands. There is no doubt that the Local Government Bill will in many parts of England admirably replace the old form of County Government, but I have misgivings as to its success elsewhere. In Wales, for instance, where what I may call such an advanced school of politicians exists as is seldom to be met with out of Ireland, the light in which the Local Government Bill is regarded is principally that it has been brought into existence for the purpose of being used like a machine in a paper-mill, which breaks up everything. In my humble opinion, the inventor of the machine forgot to provide a strong self-acting brake, for the want of which it may perhaps work at a dangerous rate. It may be that it is intended that the body of Aldermen should act as a check by constituting something like a second and superior Chamber; and if a higher standard of qualification had been required for Aldermen than for elected Councillors perhaps it would have been well. But as it is, there is ground for anxiety at the prospect of the extension of this Act, when already, for instance, we see that in a great part of Wales all magistrates are, practically speaking, entirely excluded from the position of Aldermen; and when there is hardly anything, as far as I can see, to prevent Aldermen being chosen whose status will not inspire confidence, I think there is reason for anxiety on that account. It is a matter of notoriety that a majority of those who are placed in authority by this Act have entered into an alliance with the Parnellite Party, and there is reason to apprehend danger from such a combination.

My Lords, I have expressed my own views to you fully. I hope the House will forgive me, but I take the opportunity of pointing out to Her Majesty's Government what I imagine may possibly be important. In that paragraph of the Speech which relates to Ireland it is refreshing to find that the development of the material resources of the country is the subject to which our attention is

almost exclusively directed. I have always thought that in the government of Ireland there should be a tight rein with a light hand—a hand so light as not to interfere in the least with liberty and legitimate action, but a rein so tight as to stop at once the slightest indication of turbulence. In my opinion, this is just the sort of policy which Her Majesty's Government are successfully pursuing.

Then we are told that it is intended to establish an Agricultural Department. I may also perhaps be permitted to say that the Tithe Bill will do away with what has been regarded as a grievance by some minds. I think it will have a beneficial effect, and that it will be welcomed by all except those who will consider that by the passing of such an Act they will lose a part of the stock-in-trade which they use for political agitation. In conclusion, I beg to thank your Lordships for the indulgence which you have shown.

*EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, the fact of my having had the honour of moving the first Address to the Queen in the beginning of Her Majesty's prosperous and beneficent reign, and of my having had the opportunity since then of hearing most of the speeches made on such occasions, has encouraged me, especially lately, from time to time to offer my very sincere compliments to noble Lords who have recently taken their seats in this House and who have moved or seconded the Address. My noble Friend opposite, who moved, and the noble Lord who seconded the Address, although they still seem very young to me, have had very considerable Parliamentary experience, and I should think it highly presumptuous on my part to offer them congratulations which, in other circumstances, I should give. Nothing could be more temperate than the speech of the noble Lord who seconded the Address. With regard to my noble Friend, his manner was a little more aggressive against his old political Friends than is usual on these occasions, but I do not in the least complain of that. During the very short Recess some melancholy events have occurred. The death of the Crown Prince of Austria had all the elements of the concentrated sadness of a Greek tragedy. The light which so fiercely beats upon a throne exposes its occupants to much criticism on minute subjects, but the same circumstances extend the circle of sympathy beyond what can be the case as to the grief of private individuals. I am quite sure that there is no country more than this in which such genuine sympathy has been felt for the illustrious occupants of the dual throne of Austria and Hungary and their widowed Crown Princess. A remarkable figure has disappeared from this House. Lord Eversley attained his great Parliamentary reputation in another place. I do not know any one who more completely earned the respect and esteem of both sides of this House than he did. Recent incidents have convinced me of the truth of the maxim that it is better not to condemn people until you have heard their defence. During the last few weeks I read in a paper of great reputation that I had spent my autumn in training bloodhounds, but I must inform your Lordships that that statement is quite without foundation. Again, I have seen it stated that a Secretary of State had declared that I, as Secretary of State, had invited the Italians to take Massowah, and that, I may also say, was entirely without foundation. It was also reported that Admiral Maxse had revealed a State secret to an astonished world with regard to proposals made by Lord Odo Russell to me respecting a suggested mediation on the part of England between France and Germany at the time of the Franco-German War, a mediation which the German Government was prepared to accept, and that Mr. Gladstone and I are guilty of the prolongation of the war. Lord Odo Russell never left Versailles till after the peace. There is no such despatch. The genuine despatches which were published show that Lord Odo's language was exactly in the opposite direction. I need scarcely say that there is no foundation for this statement either. With regard to foreign affairs, I notice two omissions from the Queen's Speech, one of which is doubtless due to inadvertence. I do not think that the ratification of a very important document with regard to the Suez Canal has ever been communicated to Parliament. No doubt this omission is due to inadvertence. But the other omission is one I am surprised at, as it is a question creating a great deal of sensation in the country—I refer to

to the idea that they hold the opposite opinion, by members of it treating those cases as the subject of somewhat forced hilarity. The other day a great scene took place in prison, and Mr. Balfour, speaking at the Mansion House, said that the Prison Department was not under his control, and that it was not his duty to interfere in any details, but that when cases arose which might have political results it became his duty to look into the matter. I believe it is just as much under the Lord Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary, as the Prisons Board in England is under the Home Secretary. Mr. Balfour did do this, because he boasted that he had penned a cynical Minute to the effect that if Mr. O'Brien chose to go without clothes he must bear the consequences. Two days afterwards a change takes place. Mr. O'Brien's clothes are restored, and he is placed in comparative luxury, and I find to my great astonishment that having made a demand to travel in a first-class carriage he was placed in one. Ridicule is all very well, but it may be applied both ways, and I do not think that the Government stands out very well when these things are constantly occurring. If Mr. Courtney's description of Ireland is correct, what will be the effect on the English people? There is a remarkable statement by Sir Robert Peel to the effect that "if you irritate the Irish beyond measure the result will be that they will return a majority of Irish Members hostile to this country, and if you once have that state of things it is impossible that England can govern Ireland." Here is another opinion which is often quoted: You know that in 1844 Lord Beaconsfield stated as his view of the condition of Ireland that it was the duty of all English Ministers to do by all constitutional means what the Irish, if strong enough, would effect by revolution; and he added that if those views were carried out the people of Ireland would, in 50 years—that is, about this time—be happy, contented, and prosperous. Are they so now? Lord Beaconsfield, as appears from a remarkable statement of Mr. Pierrepoint, shortly before his death stated that the time had come when the desire of the Irish people for the care and management of their local affairs and of their grievances must be considered. He said that, for his part, he thought something should be done in the shape of the American system, and he ridiculed the idea that this would lead to separation. He said with regard to the policy of force that it had failed in Cromwell's time and it would always fail. Mr. O'Connell used similar language. As it is, the great need for Ireland is pacification; and there are two ways of pacifying her. One is by meeting her wishes in a legitimate way, and thus bring peace and content. The other is by a course which can only produce dissolution and not peace, and the consummation of all trouble. In quoting Lord Beaconsfield I do not pretend that Lord Beaconsfield's opinions are to me conclusive on all political subjects, or that they have that influence with my noble Friends on this side who differ from me on the Irish question. I do not know that it will at once convert noble Lords opposite, but I appeal to that great majority whether it is not some justification of us that Lord Beaconsfield should have entertained for more than 30 years these views, and that if we have been converted to them rather lately it does not rest with noble Lords opposite to twit us with our change of view as being insane, dishonest, and self-seeking. I claim that amount of justice from noble Lords opposite, although I do not expect that they will agree with me. But I have before me evidence that the constituencies of this country are tending in that direction. No one more than myself thinks it unwise to reckon upon one or two by-elections. I am always struck by the absurd reasons which are given by the beaten party for their beating, and we Liberals commit just exactly the same fault, but of late months we have had this advantage, that these opportunities are not so frequent with us as with our opponents. When I see a Parliamentary majority melting away, I do think I have a right to claim that as a true test of the direction of public opinion. A most amusing instance of these excuses is to be found in the noble Marquess's excuse for the altered figures at the Holborn election. He said that English constituencies did not like to be represented by any one but an Englishman, and that a black man would have no chance. In the last century there was a very distinguished jurist and writer, who said if he had to make a speech in defence of the slave

trade he would say that the negroes had flat noses and were black from top to toe. It was impossible to feel any sympathy with people of that colour. It was impossible to believe that an all-wise Providence should have placed souls in a people who were black. He would have inculcated the importance of the colour of the skin by the importance of the colour of the hair, as he found that the Egyptian philosophers always killed a red-haired man, wherever they could find him. It was clear, too, that the negroes were not a civilized people, because they attached value to beads, whereas civilized people attached value to gold—he may possibly have been unaware of the bi-metallic controversy which is going on at this moment. But all these arguments unfortunately fail the noble Marquess, because the black man turned out to be rather paler than the candidate who opposed him and defeated him. Therefore it is some comfort to me that the constituencies of this country are coming to the opinion that it is time for a change of policy to take place, and that that change of policy should be in the direction which we advocate.

*THE EARL OF SELBORNE: My Lords, as the noble Earl has alluded to me and to my absence from the House last year, I may be allowed to make some remarks on that part of his speech before the noble Marquess addresses the House. I maintain this day as firmly as ever I did that the object of the Crimes Act passed the year before last was not to create new crimes in Ireland, but to prevent criminal acts already criminal by the law of both countries. I never said that it created no offences against the Act, which would have been the most preposterous thing in the world to say. On the contrary, I said in the very speech which I made in this House upon the third reading of the Bill, the Act, in order the better to provide means for repressing things which were already criminal, gave power to the Lord Lieutenant to issue proclamations in certain cases, and, of course, it made disobedience to these proclamations, either by taking part in associations which were proclaimed, or by doing things equivalent in their effect, as publishing proceedings at prohibited meetings, offences against the Act. But what I took notice of then, and always have, is this—that one of the leading sections of the Bill, the one which gave summary jurisdiction in cases of intimidation and other cases which some persons go about the country comparing to exclusive dealing, that that clause was on the very face of it limited to things already criminal and punishable by law. The provisions of the Trades Union Acts were expressly preserved, so that that clause could not affect anything of that kind, and yet people go about the country and write letters telling the people of England that the contrary of that is true. And with regard to the other leading clause, giving the Lord Lieutenant power to issue proclamations, what were the things which were to justify him in issuing proclamations? It was if he were satisfied that certain associations were dangerous, because they were formed or carried on for the commission of crime, or to encourage crime, or for opposition to the law. What I said two years ago and what I repeat now is this—that such associations were not made illegal by that Act of Parliament. They were in their very nature illegal, and their existence in Ireland made it expedient to arm the Lord Lieutenant with summary power against them, as had been done before in another shape when the noble Earl who was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Earl Spencer) was empowered to prohibit meetings, and the attending those meetings was made an offence against that Act. For the sake of preventing those dangerous and illegal associations for criminal purposes the Lord Lieutenant might issue a proclamation, and then, of course, acts done in disobedience to that proclamation were necessarily made offences against the Act. And there is no real difference between my noble and learned Friend Lord Herschell and myself so far, when he said that, in that way, new offences were created by the Act. It could not be otherwise. Till the Act was passed there could be no offence against the Act. Till the proclamation was issued there could be no offence against the proclamation. There was another observation of my noble Friend's, who always speaks candidly and like a man who is sensible of his responsibility, with which I do not agree—namely, that these things might be done with impunity in England. They could not be done in England at all. In England associations for criminal pur-

suggested that I should give a kind of preliminary rehearsal by telling him what the provisions are to be. I am afraid that the performance would be a very unsatisfactory one. It must necessarily be brief and imperfect, and might end by creating misconception. I must therefore ask the noble Earl to wait until, I hope no distant date, when those Bills will be laid on the table. Before the noble Earl sat down he made that obligatory expedition into Irish subjects which is now a necessity of almost all speeches. According to his fashion, he touched the matter lightly; he went deeply into no argument, but assumed most of the contentions of his adversaries for the sake of argument, and as far as I could observe, he committed himself to no positive statement of opinion or policy. But he contrived in the course of this performance, with his usual skill, to suggest a great number of small objections which, though they might not have a formidable influence, still have a decidedly stimulating effect on debate. He made some references to my colleague in the other House, the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I rather shrink from defending the right hon. Gentleman, who is, I think, quite competent to defend himself; especially as it is encouraging what is not a very convenient practice—that of attacking a Minister in the House in which he does not sit. But, whenever the noble Earl is guilty of that offence, I think the least he can do is to frame his accusation in terms sufficiently definite to allow of a reply being made. He did not imitate his leader in accusing my distinguished relative of cynical brutality, but he spoke of cynical observations, or something of that kind. I understand that part of the grievance against the Government is that they have not preserved a sufficiently tragic air in speaking of the experiences of Mr. O'Brien. If any Member of the Government has been guilty of the offence of laughing at Mr. O'Brien, or at the proceedings with respect to his clothes, I would ask the noble Earl, in all confidence, was there ever a prisoner so ridiculous as Mr. O'Brien? It is not possible to speak of him with the seriousness with which you would desire to speak of the case of any gentleman who had the misfortune of incurring a sentence of six months' imprisonment. But I must demur to the statement that this offence has been especially committed or even has been committed at all by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I did read one very amusing speech of my right hon. Friend; but the matter that he laughed at was nothing connected with Mr. O'Brien, but was connected with the strange proceedings of the Lord Mayor of Dublin. When a Lord Mayor sends to a Minister's house at two o'clock in the morning, and then publishes a statement that the Minister came down to him in his nightgown, and with the cross of some Order on his left breast, and it turns out that it was the Minister's private secretary who had put on a college jacket, it is very difficult indeed to put on that solemn, tragic air which the noble Lord thinks alone suitable to the circumstances. One of the painful consequences of this controversy is, that Irish people appear to have entirely lost their sense of humour, and they not only do not indulge in those sportive graces of fiction to which in former days they were accustomed, but they never seem to have a notion when they are making themselves ridiculous by their proceedings. I confess that I wish very much that it was possible to avoid any statement that would be wounding to the feelings of any sincere and earnest person; but I do feel that there is no real sincerity in this appeal for the compassion of the English people. It is a great stage-play that is being enacted for the purpose of catching a few votes at a by-election. Mr. O'Brien struggling for his clothes; Mr. Harrington mourning after his moustache; Mr. Healy dashing out of Court; Mr. O'Brien escaping; the insults offered in open Court; and all other business of that kind is only so much theatrical work which is intended to be used on platforms at by-elections to take in those of the English electors who pay little attention to these subjects, and who are easily persuaded that some great oppression is being practised. I entirely agree with my noble and learned Friend who spoke last that it is a disgraceful incident in our public life, and that it marks an epoch of degeneracy in Party struggles when no respect for the law, or for the Ministers of the law, is shown by those who have Party objects to serve, and that no regard to the effect of ob-

servations on the maintenance of the law is paid by those who have an opponent's character to blacken. The noble Lord asks us whether the state of things that is going on in Ireland is satisfactory; whether we are pleased with what is done to Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Harrington; and whether that state of things is reconcilable with our assurances that the condition of Ireland is improving, and that the operation of the law that we have passed has been salutary? I can assure the noble Lord that we never thought, never in our wildest dream hoped to improve Mr. O'Brien or Mr. Harrington. We never expect to affect their conduct. Whatever happens they will, no doubt, go on to the end trying to make political capital out of the feelings, the prejudices, and the errors of the Irish people. But what we say is, that we are stealing their following from them by the beneficent legislation that we have passed. We say that the outrages which they have encouraged are no longer so common, that the fabric of oppression and tyranny which they have set up is crumbling to its foundation, that their power is being broken, and that the Irish people are slowly, steadily, and quite perceptibly returning to ways of order and confidence and peace. And it is from the unmistakeable signs of that change that we draw our confident auguries of the future. I would ask your Lordships' leave to read a few figures to show from the unfailing testimony of crime and outrage how real the improvement in the condition of Ireland has been. I will take only two points —the question of agrarian outrages and the question of boycotting. I find that whereas at the height of the crisis during the viceroyalty of Earl Cowper in 1881 the agrarian offences ran up to 4,439, in 1883, under the influence of the Crimes Act, they fell to 870. They rose in 1886 to 1,056. Now they have fallen to 660, which is lower than in any year since the time when the agitation commenced, and lower than it was in 1879, when the number was 863. Therefore, we have a right to say that the instrument we use to discourage crime is apparently having its effect. Another test is the rapid disappearance or diminution of that atrocious practice of boycotting which is a very different thing from what it pleases some statesmen to call exclusive dealing. On the 31st of July, 1887, the number of persons Boycotted was 4,835. On the 31st of July, 1888, they sank to 1,179. That was in the first year of the Crimes Act. On the 31st of January last they sank to 555. That was in a year and a-half of the Crimes Act. Therefore, we are justified in saying in the Queen's Speech that the measures which Parliament passed have already had a salutary effect. The noble Lord derives great consolation from the result of by-elections. It is a curious arithmetical study on which Oppositions especially love to dwell during the period they remain in that position. It beguiles its tedium. But I doubt whether the experience of the past can encourage us in drawing any very confident inferences from the result of by-elections. It is natural that it should be so; because, whereas in a general election the attention of the whole people is directed to the burning questions of the day, at a by-election it is very difficult to obtain a similar concentration of views. But I ask the noble Lord to remember what took place in the last decade during Mr. Gladstone's Government of 1869-74. There was a constant succession of by-elections going against the Government; and when the General Election came the by-elections were confirmed and the Liberal Party was defeated. But in the next Ministry the by-elections went for the Government. Everybody remembers the crucial cases of Southwark and Liverpool. Nevertheless, when the General Election came the by-elections were not confirmed, but were reversed, and the Conservative Party were defeated. So that in the two great cases which you have to guide you since the Reform Act of 1867 the by-elections in one case were reversed by the General Election, and in the other case they were confirmed. Therefore, I am justified in saying that it is a perfectly idle study to attempt to cast the horoscope of a future General Election by by-elections. But I confess that I wish to pass from that somewhat ignoble discussion. I do not care, in reference to the course that we are to pursue, what the verdict of a by-election may be. Parliament has been returned to give its advice and to sanction the measures which it honestly believes to

be for the advantage of the country. In the performance of that duty it must listen to no superior and take the advice of no authority whatever. It is its business to consult its own wisdom and its own conscience. This Parliament will, I have no doubt, like other Parliaments, perform that duty to the end of its existence, whenever that end may come. What the result of the next General Election may be I will not attempt to forecast. I believe, myself, it will be in favour of the maintenance of the Union, because I have great faith in the sound sense of the English people. The noble Lord thinks that he will, at some distant period, obtain a reversal of the last decision at the poll. Concede, for argument's sake, that it is possible that prophecy should prove true. Does he imagine that that would be a close of the controversy? Does he imagine that our convictions would be affected by that, or that we should struggle a bit the less earnestly than before to maintain, and, if need be, to restore the Union. We are engaged upon an enterprise of momentous importance—that of keeping unimpaired the unity of an Empire which has never been divided yet—an Empire which has lasted for centuries, whose glories we have inherited and which we are bound to transmit. It is not by any passing vicissitudes of political opinion that our duty in such a matter can be determined. To the end, whether through good report, or through evil report, but sustained, I fully believe, by the increasing convictions and the courage of the people of this country, we shall uphold the integrity of the Empire.

Address agreed to, *nemine dissentiente*, and ordered to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos appointed, *nemine dissentiente*, to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this Session.

Committee for Privileges — Appointed.

Sub-Committee for the Journals—Appointed.

Appeal Committee—Appointed.

House adjourned at Twenty minutes after Six o'clock till To-morrow, a quarter after Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 21*st February*, 1889.

The House met at half after One of the clock.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

NEW WRITS DURING THE RECESS.

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House,—that he had issued, during the Recess, Warrants for New Writs, for Lanarkshire (Govan Division) *v.* Sir William Pearce, baronet, deceased; for Perthshire (Eastern Division) *v.* Robert Stewart Menzies, esquire, deceased.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (IMPRISONMENT OF MEMBERS.)

Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House, that he had received the following Letters relating to the imprisonment of certain Members of this House:—

Tralee,
January 1st, 1889.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. Edward Harrington, Member of Parliament for West Kerry, was yesterday convicted at a Court formed under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure Bill (Ireland) Act, held at Tralee, of which I was Chairman, on a charge of publishing in a certain newspaper, called the *Kerry Sentinel*, a report of a meeting of a Branch of the National League, which is suppressed by order of the Lord Lieutenant, and was sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. He is now in Tralee Gaol.

I have the honour to remain,
Your obedient Servant,
Cecil R. Roche,
Resident Magistrate,
Tralee.

To the Right Honble. The Speaker.

Limerick Club,
January 4th, 1889.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. John Finucane, a Member of the House of

Commons, was this day convicted before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction, at which I presided, of an offence under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 50 and 51 Vict., and was therefore sentenced to be imprisoned in the County Gaol at Limerick for the period of one calendar month, and that he is now in said gaol.

I have the honour to be,
Your obt. Servt.
RICHARD EATON, R.M.
The Right Honble. the Speaker.

Waterford,
February 1st, 1889.

Sir,

We beg to inform you that, on the 25th day January, 1888, we convicted Mr. William O'Brien, a Member of the House of Commons, of the offence "of having on the 30th day of September, 1888, at Ballyneale, in the county of Tipperary, being a district then duly proclaimed pursuant to the provisions of 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887,' with divers other persons whose names were unknown, unlawfully taken part in a criminal conspiracy which, at the time of the passing of the said last-mentioned Act, and also on the said 30th day of September, 1888 was punishable by law, to wit, a conspiracy to induce certain persons resident in said county, whose names are unknown, who then were or who thereafter might become desirous to hire or occupy any land or lands in said county, from which any tenant or tenants, occupier or occupiers, had theretofore been or should thereafter be evicted by due process or course of law, not to hire, use, or occupy any such land or lands," under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (1reland) Act, 1887," and we sentenced him to be imprisoned for four months, without hard labour, in the County of Tipperary Gaol at Clonmel. He was arrested upon our warrant some days afterwards, and is at present in the Prison at Clonmel.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servants,
D. G. BODKIN, Resident Magistrate.
HEFF. F. CONSIDINE, Resident Magistrate.
The Right Honble.
The Speaker of the House of Commons,
Westminster.

Tralee,
Feb. 19th, 1889.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. William O'Brien, Member of Parliament, was this day convicted at a Court held at Tralee, under "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," of which I was Chairman, of an offence under Section 2 of said Act—namely, taking part in a conspiracy punishable by law. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment without hard labour. He is now in Tralee Gaol.

I have the honour to remain,
Your obedient Servant,
CECIL R. ROCHE, R.M.
The Right Honble. The Speaker.

ELECTIONS.

Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their election for which of the places they will serve within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the Return for that place; and if anything shall come in question touching the Return or Election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double Returns do withdraw till their Returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his vote in the Election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the Election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a Candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected, or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be, by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any Witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime and misdemeanor; and this House will

proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the Session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Sergeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

PRIVILEGES.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

"For the more effectual preventing Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time, ordered to be read a second time.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Sir Horace Davey, knight, Q.C., for Stockton.

NOTICE.

—o—

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Sir, it will, perhaps, be convenient for the House if I now give notice that when we come to discuss the Address in reply to Her Majesty's most gracious Speech, I propose to move an Amendment upon the paragraph relating to administration in Ireland. I do not know whether I shall be in order in reading the terms of the motion I propose to make. My Amendment will be this:—

"Humbly to represent to your Majesty that the present system of administration in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust; that it violates the rights and alienates the affections of your Majesty's Irish subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain; and also humbly to represent to your Majesty that such measures of conciliation should be adopted as may bring about the contentment of the Irish people, and establish a real union between Great Britain and Ireland."

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

MR. SPEAKER reported Her Majesty's Speech, made by Her CHANCELLOR, and read it to the House.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

*Mr. M. H. SHAW-STEWART (Renfrew), who was attired in the uniform of a Deputy Lieutenant: Sir, I rise to move that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty in reply to the most gracious Speech from the Throne. I believe it is the custom for a Member undertaking this honourable task, to ask for the indulgence of the House, and I can assure you, Sir, and I can assure the House, that in following that custom it is with no sense of any formality, but in all sincerity, that I ask for that indulgence, more especially as I have ventured to address the House only on one previous occasion. Sir, the first portion of the Royal Speech deals with Foreign Affairs, and commences with the gratifying announcement of our continued and cordial relations with other Powers. We are next informed that the operations in Egypt which were carried out by Her Majesty's troops, acting in concert with the troops of His Highness the Khedive, have been entirely successful. Those operations, Sir, were not on an extensive scale, but they afforded an opportunity for a display of tactical skill on the part of the commander, and of a dash and discipline on the parts of the British and native troops, such as are calculated to call forth the admiration and gratitude of all who value soldierly qualities in our own troops and in those of our allies. In their Egyptian Policy, the Government have been bound by certain engagements entered into by their predecessors, and to those engagements they have steadily and loyally adhered. The protection of the ports on the Red Sea was one of the conditions of those engagements, and, Suakim being one of those ports, the Government were bound to assist the Egyptian Government in protecting that place from the hostile attacks which harassed its in-

habitants and endangered its safety. Suakim has by the action of the Government been entirely freed from those attacks, and I am sure that the House will learn with satisfaction from the Royal Speech that there is no ground for apprehending their renewal. There have been some who have thought that the Government should have pushed forward the troops and occupied Handoub and Tokar, with a view of re-entering the Soudan. Sir, it is very far from my wish to raise or revive Party questions on the present occasion, but it is necessary to bear in mind that with regard to the policy of evacuating the Soudan, the present Government have had no choice in the matter; for that policy was decided on so long ago as December, 1883, as appears in a despatch from Lord Granville to Sir Evelyn Baring, dated the 13th of that month; and to occupy those places now would involve us in a reversal of that policy, and embark us in a very large and costly enterprise. Sir, with regard to Sikkim, I am sure that this House re-echoes the hope expressed in Her Majesty's Speech, that further military operations will not be necessary, although the negotiations have not yet been favourably settled. In dealing with the Rulers of Thibet, Her Majesty's advisers are dealing with a people well versed in diplomatic delays, but we may trust that they will soon realize the fruitlessness of encroaching on our undoubted rights over the territory of Sikkim. Sir, Her Majesty's Speech has intimated that this country will take part in a Conference at Berlin with Germany and the United States upon the affairs of Samoa. It would not be right further to allude to the subject, except to say that I am sure I am only giving utterance to the sentiments of every Member of this House when I express the hope that the Conference will be attended with happy results, and that the affairs of Samoa will be harmoniously and satisfactorily settled. I will now leave the difficult and delicate subject of Foreign Affairs, believing that the conduct of our foreign relations are, humanly speaking, safe in the hands of the Marquess of Salisbury, to whose prudence and foresight we owe in very great measure the satisfactory state of our relations with other Powers. Sir, the next paragraph is of the utmost importance. It foreshadows increased expenditure, but expenditure which cannot safely be withheld, and in a direction which I do not think will be seriously objected to by anyone who knows anything of the necessities of the case. I cannot conceive, Sir, that any serious opposition will arise as to the expediency of the proposals to be submitted by the Government, although the details will no doubt be the subject of considerable discussion. But I shall leave all further consideration of this subject to my hon. and gallant Friend, who is so well qualified by training and knowledge to deal with it. I will only add that, having some opportunities of knowing the opinions of those engaged in the great mercantile shipping industry of the Clyde, I can safely say that all those who are engaged in every branch of that industry are awaiting with the deepest interest the proposals of the Government and the result of our deliberations upon this vital question. Her Majesty's Speech next directs our attention to a subject which has already occupied this House, viz., Local Government. I believe, Sir, that future politicians will acknowledge as one of the greatest achievements of the present Administration, the development and extension throughout the country of the system of Local Government. It is impossible to regard without the greatest interest that which is passing around us in England at present, as we watch the fruit of our labours of last Session gradually developing since the Local Government Act has come into operation. Sir, it had not been my intention to dwell on the subject of Local Government farther than to allude to the proposed measure for Scotland, but an hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) having just called attention to opinions which I have ventured to lay before my constituents, I should not like to lose this opportunity of saying that I stand by all I have said. I am in favour of extending the system of Local Government to all parts of the United Kingdom, but it must be done with prudence, and we must be perfectly certain that the people to whom it is proposed to give increased powers are free agents, and altogether independent of the control of any organization which may be at variance with the laws of the land, whatever those

we learn with satisfaction that the Statutes which we have recently passed for the restoration of order and confidence in Ireland have already been attended with salutary results.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that legislative provision will be necessary for executing the Convention into which Your Majesty has entered for the suppression of bounties on the exportation of sugar, and also for completing the conversion of the Three per Cent. Annuities. That the state of the gold coinage has for some years past been the subject of legitimate complaint, and that a measure for restoring it to a satisfactory condition will be laid before us.

"We humbly thank Your Majesty for informing us that the Commission which Your Majesty appointed to inquire into the Civil Establishments of the United Kingdom has not yet completed its labours, that it has already made a Report of much value, and that proposals for legislation arising out of that Report will be submitted to us.

"We thank Your Majesty for informing us that several subjects which Your Majesty commended to our care in previous years, but which the increasing burden of our duties has shut out from consideration, will be submitted to us again. That in this number will be included Measures relating to tithes, for the regulation of the Universities of Scotland, for determining the liability of employers in the case of accidents, for establishing a Department of Agriculture, for cheapening the transfer of land, and for remedying abuses attaching to Joint Stock Companies formed under limited liability.

"We humbly assure Your Majesty that our careful consideration shall be given to the subjects which Your Majesty has recommended to our attention, and to the Measures which may be submitted to us; and we earnestly trust that in these and all other efforts which we may make to promote the well being of Your Majesty's people we may be guided by the hand of Almighty God."

*Sir J. C. R. COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.), who was attired in the uniform of the Royal Marine Artillery: I may commence, Sir, by asking the indulgence of the House, and the kind and courteous consideration which it is ever ready to extend to those who are anxious neither to trespass upon its time, nor to infringe by one iota upon its ancient privileges and customs. I wish also, Sir, to thank my hon. Friend for his very able speech, and for having dealt with so many matters in so short a space of time, with clearness and with force, and altogether in a manner worthy of the country which he represents. Now, Sir, passing to Her Majesty's gracious Speech, I will venture to say that, looking at the Speech as a whole, it may be taken to indicate that the policy of Her Majesty's advisers is steadfast in its aim, and continuous in its operation, as well as business-like in its character; and I look forward, Sir, with hope to seeing the various measures therein proposed converted into law. I concur generally in all that has fallen from my hon. Friend, and it is unnecessary for me, therefore, to follow in detail his speech, but I cannot help giving a passing reference to the paragraph dealing with the operations against Suakim, for I wish to express satisfaction, on behalf of my constituents, that the black troops showed courage, endurance, and discipline; that our officers who were on the spot showed that their opinions were so trustworthy, and that Her Majesty's Government in trusting to the officers on the spot were so completely and so absolutely vindicated. On behalf of East London, and as one of the representatives of industrial London, I cordially re-echo what has fallen from my hon. Friend with regard to the Sugar Bounties. It has been, Sir, a source of considerable agitation in the East End of London, and I am thankful to think that the persistent exertions of Her Majesty's Government have removed what was a just cause of complaint; and not only, Sir, is this a matter affecting the working-classes of this Kingdom, but what has been done is also regarded with satisfaction by our fellow subjects in the Colonies of Mauritius and the West Indies. I come now to the Employers' Liability Bill, in which working-class constituencies take great interest, and I congratulate the Government on the persistency with which it is pressing the measure. I hope that it will soon become law. And now, Sir, I will venture to offer one or two brief observations with respect to the reference in the Speech to Ireland, and I would ask hon. Gentlemen from that country to remember that my opinions have not been formed from newspaper reports or from reading pamphlets or speeches, but from my long association with the country

itself—an association which I hope will long continue. But the Ireland I know is not the Ireland of certain classes of the Press. All my sympathies and my pleasantest memories are associated with that country. I certainly desire to refrain from saying anything calculated to raise a heated controversy, but I must say that from personal knowledge I can endorse the view that recent legislation has had a salutary effect. Liberty to the individual is returning, and something more is returning as a consequence, and that is hope. Ireland is settling down in the walks of peaceful industry, and I am sure that in developing the resources of Ireland as the Government propose, you will really help people who are ready and willing to help themselves. I hope, Sir, and believe that the development of the natural and material resources of Ireland will be a crowning success, as it must be if it is carried through in a broad and statesmanlike spirit. I believe that as knowledge increases among the Irish people, they will recognize the value and truth of the dictum of Dean Swift, that the truest patriotism may be found in the prosaic work of Agriculture, and in making "two blades of corn grow where one only grew before." I am rejoiced to see that the land tribunals of the country are to be dealt with, because there has been so much legislation during the two past decades with regard to land that there is a great deal of over-lapping and a great deal of friction which requires to be removed in the transactions of the different Courts. This reform will prove a real and common-sense advantage to the country. It is undoubtedly true, Sir, that order is being restored and that confidence is returning in Ireland, and as order is Heaven's first law, so must it be Ireland's first hope. If you look at the returns of the railways, you will see that there is an increase of traffic, and surely that is good evidence of increased business? The other day, looking at the traffic returns of the Great Southern and Western Railway, which connects the whole of the South and West of Ireland with the rest of that country, and with the United Kingdom, I saw evidence of a remarkable fact which justifies the opinion of Her Majesty's advisers, that in every branch of traffic the receipts have enormously increased, except in one class of traffic, and that is for the transport of troops. And so, Sir, you see that while we have not to pay for the movement of troops to enforce order at the same rate as we formerly had to, the Irish people are getting the benefit of increased trade and business, and the Irish shareholders are reaping the fruits of returning confidence. Besides the beneficent legislation that has been passed to aid the Irish tenantry, and besides the legislation which was unfortunately necessary to restore to a settled state of things the disturbed mind of Ireland, we have to thank also the Executive, from the highest to the lowest, for the courage and resolution with which they have carried out, as it was their duty to do, the law. I now, Sir, will venture to make a few general observations with regard to the one paragraph in the Speech which my hon. Friend left very much to me. I come, Sir, to the announcement as to the increase in the precautions which have hitherto been taken for the safety of our shores and of our commerce, and I venture to say, Sir, that throughout the length and breadth of this Kingdom, and throughout the length and breadth of this mighty Empire, there will be a sense of satisfaction and of thankfulness that the precautions necessary for the safety of our shores and commerce are—at last—to be increased. We have, Sir, no indication as yet as to what those measures are to be, and it would be premature to discuss proposals which may rest after all upon imagination, but we have this, which we have never had before—we have guarantees that the expenditure is not going to be hastily incurred. We have the unusual guarantee that the whole subject has been examined by a Special Committee of the Cabinet, presided over by the Prime Minister himself, and any casual reader even of the daily papers will see how unceasingly—although he is bowed down with his duties and responsibilities as Foreign Minister—Lord Salisbury has applied himself to investigating the question. We have another guarantee that, besides this Committee of the Cabinet, there has been a Royal Commission presided over by the noble Lord, the Member for Rossendale, investigating various branches of this sub-

not wish to invite lengthened discussion on this matter at the present time, and I do not think that we can profitably engage in it until we have the papers in our hands. There is another subject of which no notice is taken in this portion of the Speech, upon which I certainly, for one, had expected that Her Majesty's Speech could not be silent—I mean the subject of the state of Zanzibar, and the prosecution of the joint enterprise, for an honourable and philanthropic purpose undoubtedly—the joint enterprise in which Her Majesty's Government has entered along with the German Empire, in relation to the Slave Trade off the Coast of Zanzibar. This is a subject on which I urgently press upon the Government a request for early and ample information—I do not mean so much in the present debate, unless it should be raised, as I suppose is possible, in an explicit and detailed form, by hon. Members in the exercise of their own judgment, either on this or the other side of the House. At any rate, it is desirable that we should soon have information which will enable us to form a judgment upon what has passed and what is passing in that country. Undoubtedly no one would question that incidents have there occurred which are or may be of a character calculated to excite misgiving, apprehension, and regret. I speak now, not of the Convention with Germany with regard to the Slave Trade, but of what has taken place in the interior. And, without any prejudice to the more extended observations which may be made in this debate on the question of Zanibar, I press earnestly on the Government that it is quite necessary that adequate information should be laid before us to enable us to form a judgment upon the condition of that country. Now, Sir, I come to the paragraph which relates to the Estimates, and I cannot help observing that there is not an absolute equality between the measure which we deal out to ourselves and that which we deal out to foreign countries. When we speak of the increase of our own armaments we speak of "precautions taken for the safety of our trade and commerce." When we speak of the increase of foreign armaments, though the things done are precisely the same, it is no longer the case that foreign countries are to be credited with anxiety about their shores or about their borders, which are as important as their shores, or about their commerce, but changes, which for us are only peaceful precautions, in their case are described by Her Majesty from the Throne as "warlike preparations." I cannot think that this distinction in phraseology is altogether felicitous. But on the subject itself I am much too sensible of its gravity and of its importance, and likewise of the necessity of leaving to Her Majesty's Government a perfectly free and open field for the declaration of what they mean to do and as to the manner in which they mean to do it, to say anything which can imply any foregone conclusion, or which can impede in any degree the exercise of their free action on a very great and urgent subject. But this I will say, that if it be true that there is to be very great addition to the expenditure, which is already not far short of three times what it was at a period within my recollection, it will be certainly the duty of the House to be exacting in the proof of the necessity for that addition. Further, I will say that, instead of speaking with exultation of the undoubted power of this country to discharge all the responsibilities of empire by military means, instead of simply regarding that as a matter of exultation, I hope we shall bear in mind that these augmentations—whether you call them warlike preparations or peaceful precautions—are one of the greatest calamities, and not only one of the greatest calamities, but one of the greatest dangers which threaten our time and the time of our descendants. It is extremely difficult even for those who think that they are rendering but a slow obedience to the call of necessity—and I do not hesitate to give the Government credit for that belief—it is extremely difficult to be absolutely sure that you are not aggravating this evil elsewhere, even while you think that the measures you are adopting are simply those of a needful and wholesome character. I may observe that there was in this country a word which I believe still retains its place in the dictionaries, but which I believe in other respects has faded out of recollection, and in particular out of the recollection of those who at the present time frame the speeches from the Throne —I mean the word economy. It was a

Parliamentary tradition that the Queen should assure Her faithful Commons that economy had been observed in the preparation of the Estimates, and I am bound to say that I do not see, in the assumed necessity, or even in the real necessity, if it should be proved, for the extension of armaments, any adequate reason for the omission to convey to us an assurance of the pledge of Her Majesty that what was to be done should be done with a careful regard for economy in its conception and its execution. I pass on from this important subject, into which I do not think it would become me more deeply to enter, especially at the present time—I pass on to the commencement of those portions of the Speech which relate to coming legislation; and here I must say I cannot withhold my tribute to the courage of Her Majesty's Ministers. It is commonly said that the burnt child dreads the fire. The Government has had xperience from which it has unquestionably learned that long catalogues of legislative measures in the Queen's Speech at the beginning of the Session are liable to be grievously and terribly abridged before arriving at the close of the Session, before the records of actual accomplishment can be completed. Her Majesty's Government have had that experience, but their courage is unabated, and I think in the present Speech— although I gladly admit that it is a document which has the recommendation of brevity—a longer catalogue of important measures, and I am afraid a longer catalogue of contentious measures, is promised to Parliament than has been usual even upon former occasions, when not such copious warnings had been delivered by practical experience as to the danger of propounding multitudes of proposals that are not likely to become legislative measures. I will confine myself to this subject generally, without touching upon those measures except in almost a single word. I will confine myself to the expression of a very humble and earnest hope that the Session which we begin to-day may reach its prorogation before Christmas Eve. There is a sentence upon the subject of the Local Government Act with regard to which I shall be glad if a word of explanation can be given. Of course, I do not intend to ask Her Majesty's Government for a description of the various particulars which they may intend to include in their amending Act, but they state that it is intended, with regard to some portions of the Bill which were dropped last year in consequence of the pressure on the time of Parliament, to introduce a Bill dealing with those matters. I think it would be vain to hope that Her Majesty's Government intend by the proposals they may make this year to give that largeness of scope to the valueable Bill of last Session which we on this side of the House desire. But there is one very important subject which was dropped out of the Bill, and with which it does not seem too much to anticipate—and I venture to anticipate — that Her Majesty's Government will deal this Session; I mean, the question of District Councils. That is a subject upon which I ask for no details whatever, but it would be well if the House were apprised that upon that subject at any rate it is intended by the Government to propose legislation. I am afraid that the Government may have reason to expect that those of us who think that the Local Government Bill—honourable as it was to its original propounder in this House and to the Government which was responsible for it—yet does require a far larger provision, a far larger catalogue of legislative provisions and powers, than those with which it has yet been supplied—it may be our duty in some cases undoubtedly to make endeavours for the enlargement of such a measure as they may lay before us. But at any rate it will be satisfactory as far as it goes to know that an important supplementary proposition in aid of the scheme of last year is to be submitted to us on the responsibility of the Government. I accord my best wishes for the measure of Local Government for Scotland. That question, I hope, will not be found to raise difficulties more serious than those which we were enabled to surmount last year. I am quite sure that as far as the capacity of the Scottish people for self-governing operations is concerned it would be impossible to secure a more favourable theatre of operations for any measure aiming at the extension of local privilege and power than the theatre which is offered by the kingdom of Scotland. With regard to the absence of Ireland from the pro-

visions for Local Government, I might indeed express the deep regret with which I noticed that absence. But such an expression would tend to become a part of the discussion into which we are to be drawn, and I therefore pass onwards from that subject without comment. I can only say, upon the subject of the Irish paragraph, without touching upon that which is the most important part of it, that there is nothing in the earlier portions of that paragraph which tends to improve the features of the Irish policy of the Government. I do not understand these measures for the development of the industrial resources of Ireland to be anything but a repetition of old experiments, which have been tried before with large outlay of money, and with total failure for the most part of purpose, and which have constituted, in fact and in the main, an exhibition of our impotence to deal with the great and fundamental interests involved in the government of Ireland. With respect to the landed tribunals in particular—the tribunals having special jurisdiction over land—I hope in the preparation of their measures the Government will bear in mind the extremely delicate nature of the ground upon which they tread, and the state of mind of the tenantry throughout the country in regard to the securities given them for the legislative privileges that they enjoy; and that they will avoid even the appearance of anything which can tend to justify the supposition that there is any intention, avowed or unavowed, under the name of remodelling tribunals, to abridge or endanger any of those privileges. As I have said, I will refrain from making the legislative intentions of the Government the subject of comment. I will only make that observation of which I have already spoken on that part of the speech of the hon. mover, where he expressed his hope that the debate on the Address will not be such as to reach any considerable length. Had there been a doubt in the mind of my right hon. Friend near me as to the necessity of an Irish discussion, the Government have themselves, by an unusual proceeding, but a proceeding that I do not deny to have been undoubtedly within their competence to adopt, settled the question for us. The usual form of drawing the Queen's Speech is not to commit the House on contested matters to an expression of opinion. But the Government on this occasion have thought fit in framing the Address to deviate from that well-established usage. I do not say it is a binding usage. The Government may have a right—I do not enter into that question—to introduce into the Address what they please, though if it is to be done, it is well it should be done after notice to hon. Members. But I do not recollect for very many years a case where the House has been called upon to express its opinion upon contested matter in an Address to the Throne. One sentence read by the hon. mover was as follows: —"We assure your Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that the statutes which we have recently passed for the restoration of order and confidence in Ireland have already been attended with salutary effects." [*Cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite are quite prepared, I dare say, to adopt that proposition, but those cheers are the strongest confirmation of the observation which I find it my duty to make, that this declaration in the Speech is a binding one, and therefore to us who do not agree with the proposition set forth, but who, on the contrary, do emphatically dissent from it, is not only a binding, but also distinctly a challenging proposition. If the debate on the Address be a prolonged debate, and if it deal widely with the system of administration in Ireland as it now prevails, it is to the direct action, to the responsible proposals of Her Majesty's Government in the first degree, and to the amendment of my right hon. Friend only in the second degree, that the prolongation of the debate will be due. My right hon. Friend will not shrink from his responsibility. He would have found it his duty to make his proposal even if the form of the Speech had been the usual one. The form, however, is not the usual one, and we resist, and must resist to the utmost, an attempt to pledge us to a proposition with regard to the condition of Ireland, which proposition is, in our judgment, totally untrue. I wish to make only one more observation. Beyond stating that we are compelled to challenge the truth of that proposition, I have not said, and I do not mean to say, a single word upon the Irish question. I venture respectfully to suggest that it will be for the conve-

nience of the House, if there is to be upon the Irish paragraph a distinct motion, debate, and division, that we should separate that debate and discussion entirely from the remarks which we may think it our duty to make on the preceding portions of the Speech, and that we should, if we can, deal with them as separate subjects and reserve for Ireland the advantage of a discussion which will be, of course, proportional to its importance, never, I hope, forgetting the great importance likewise of getting forward with public business; and that we shall not lose the time of the House by casual, partial, and imperfect discussion of the Irish question mixed with a number of other subjects. With these remarks I will conclude what I have to say on the present occasion. I will only now say that if it should be the view of Her Majesty's Government that it would be better to revert to the usual form of Address and to remove the binding statement—if it has crept in through inadvertence and it is desired to amend it—I should be the last person to interpose any technical objection in the way of that amendment. However that may be, it is for Her Majesty's Government to consider. The debate upon Ireland is an inevitable debate. As to the discussion of other questions, important as they are, I trust we shall recollect that as to most of them the fullest opportunities are certain to be afforded to us in the development of the business of the Session. In regard to all of them we shall endeavour to evince a desire which I think, in the last Session of Parliament, we (the Opposition) did evince, to avoid the unnecessary prolongation of debate, and to forward the business of the House.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): My first duty is to join in the congratulations which have been offered to my hon. Friends behind me with regard to the manner in which they have discharged the very difficult duty of moving and seconding the Address to the Crown. The speeches from my hon. Friends give promise of great usefulness in the part my hon. Friends may take in discussions in this House, which I feel confident will be amply fulfilled. I may perhaps be permitted to refer to the last observations of the right hon. Gentleman before I proceed to deal with his earlier remarks. The right hon. Gentleman has made an offer to the Government to assist them in removing from the Address a passage which he said would bind the House to an expression of opinion, but I am not aware that there is any marked difference in the tone and character of Her Majesty's Speech from the Speeches which preceded it under the Government of the right hon. Gentleman himself. In the Queen's Speech reference has always been made to Ireland and to the success of the measures which have been adopted for Ireland.

MR. GLADSTONE: It was not the form of the Speech, but the form of the Address, that I complained of.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not enter into any question with the right hon. Gentleman as to the form of the Address, as the right hon. Gentleman is much more a master of matters of that kind than I can be; but my impression is that the Address is framed in the usual form, and that it is simply an echo of the Speech. The right hon. Gentleman has reminded the House that we must have a debate on Ireland. We recognize that, under the circumstances in which we are placed, a debate on the affairs of Ireland, on the Administration of Ireland, and on the conduct of the Administration of Ireland is one which we must be prepared to meet throughly and completly in the face of the country and of the House. We are perfectly ready to meet the challenge which the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Newcastle has thrown down. But, like the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, I trust that regard will be had to the exigencies of the public service, and to the duties which the House has to discharge in addition to those with reference to Ireland. Taking the advice which the right hon. Gentleman has given, I will refrain from making any allusion to the state of affairs in Ireland until we come to the debate on that subject. Now I will turn to the observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman in regard to Foreign Affairs. The right hon. Gentleman expressed his satisfaction at the result of the operations at Suakin; but he insisted that there was no indication on the part of the Government of any prospective contraction of the responsibilities of

Egypt or of this country in regard to the Ports of the Red Sea. We have had to consider whether the circumstances are so greatly changed from those under which the obligations were entered into by the late Government as to justify us in advising the Government of Egypt to relinquish that which we believed, and which the late Government believed, to be necessary for the security of Egypt, and also to be necessary for that policy of the suppression of the slave trade to which this country has been so long committed. We believe that at present the possession of Suakin is necessary to the safety and security of Egypt. We are of the same opinion as that under which the Government of the right hon. Gentleman acted four years ago, and no circumstances have occurred to justify us in tendering advice to the Government of the Khedive that the Port of Suakin should be relinquished in favour of those whose object and endeavours have been to disturb the tranquility and prosperity of Egypt. I think we have made great progress towards a settlement, and an approach to a period of prosperity—progress much greater than we could have reasonably expected within the time during which our influence has been exercised, and we have every reason to rely on the prudence, judgment, and good sense of those who administer the government of that country. The right hon. Gentleman has remarked on the omission from the Speech of any paragraph in reference to Samoa, and he regretted there was no policy indicated. The right hon. Gentleman was hardly accurate in suggesting—I do not know that he stated—that Her Majesty's Government are responsible for the suspension of the Conference which sat at Washington. The Conference is to be renewed at Berlin, and papers are in course of preparation and will be presented to the House; but it would not be proper that Her Majesty's Government, pending the proceedings of that Conference, should express any strong opinion as to the course which has been pursued in Samoa. We have, however, the assurance of the German Government that they do not recede from the engagement which they gave to respect the rights of the English and Americans in Samoa, and we have complete confidence that the German Government will abide by their engagements, and carry them out to the fullest extent. As to Zanzibar, no one could have read the accounts of the proceedings in the interior of Africa without the deepest regret, but Her Majesty's Government are not responsible for the course which has been pursued. Germany acts within her perfect right in the course she has taken. She is exercising no powers beyond those given under the arrangements made by the late Government in 1885; and we certainly have no right, as a nation or as a Government, to complain of the course which has been pursued by her. Papers are in course of preparation. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the paragraph relating to the Estimates, and he regretted that the word "economy" was omitted. If it will be any satisfaction to the right hon. Gentleman and to the House, I will say that the greatest possible regard has been paid to economy in the preparation of the Estimates for the services of the country, but we think that it is rather unnecessary to refer to economy and to take credit for economy at a time when our sense of public duty compels us to ask for a larger provision for the public service. Economy has been most strictly, rigidly applied, and when the Estimates come before the House for consideration it will be found, I am confident, that the Civil Service Estimates show evidence of economy, and that even in the military and naval departments evidence of economy will be exhibited—facts which, in my opinion, are far more valuable to the House and the country than the introduction of words in the Speech from the Throne. We prefer to give evidence of serious work in this direction rather than to talk loudly of it. Then the right hon. Gentleman complains that we attribute somewhat different motives when we come to refer to the warlike preparations of others; we do not use the same language or attribute the same motives to ourselves when we speak of the defences and precautions necessary for the security of the country. We attribute no unworthy motives to other nations. We do not venture to call in question—we have no right to call in question—the disposition made by foreign countries of the resources at their disposal. We cannot question

their right to do with their resources as they think fit—to increase their armaments, their armies, and their navies. We say what we believe to be the attitude at the present moment of every European Power—we say that it is absolutely friendly to this country. We have no reason to doubt their assurances or mistrust their good intentions, but the enormous armaments that prevail in Europe are of such a character that those who are entrusted with the great and responsible duty of caring for the security of our interests, our trade, our commerce, cannot but regard them as dangerous, as menacing to our interests. We do not know, but we do hope and believe, that we shall not be threatened by any combination of any Foreign Powers; but, Sir, if I would say anything on this head, it would be to re-echo the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman as to the evils, the misfortune, these enormous armaments entail upon those who have to bear the cost. It is not for me to say in any case such armament is not necessary for the safety of the Power making it, but these armaments entail an expenditure and create a danger which is alarming and serious to Europe. It is deeply to be deplored by Europe at large; but, in view of it, it becomes our duty to take such precautions for defence alone as may be necessary to protect the country. I will not venture to enter into these precautions, because an opportunity will be afforded on Thursday next, when my noble Friend, the First Lord of the Admiralty, will lay the proposals of the Government before the House. We have carefully considered these proposals. We believe them, upon our responsibility as a Government, to be necessary for the safety and security of the Empire. We do not frame them from any hostile purpose or inclination towards any Government on the face of the earth. We simply desire to protect and render safe the interests and the trade of the country, its food supplies, and the raw material which come into the country, and which is necessary for manufactures and for the employment of the people. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of the long catalogue of measures and its liability to abridgment, and I am afraid he is only giving us the result of a long Parliamentary experience when he says the Ministerial statement in the Queen's Speech details a number of measures the Government desire to lay before Parliament, but a list undoubtedly liable to curtailment; but I venture to think that if we had put before the House some two or three measures only as those we desired the House to consider, we should have been reproached by the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends for ignoring what in their view were many burning questions ripe for solution. I have some hope that Members of Parliament, looking to the importance of the questions to be submitted to their consideration, will, for the time, deny themselves the satisfaction of prolonged debate on measures which have been well considered in principle, and that they will allow these Bills, so far as the details are concerned, to go again before those Standing Committees which rendered great service last year. I hope that the Session may be terminated under these circumstances before Christmas Eve, and I hope hon. Members will contribute to that result by some amount of self-denial and by the avoidance of the repetition of arguments used by previous speakers. I appeal to them to do that in the interest of business. The country requires legislation, and it is the duty of the Government at least to give the House of Commons an opportunity of considering these measures. The responsibility will rest with individual Members of the House of Commons if by protracted debate this is prevented. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the Local Government Bill, and expressed the hope that the portion which referred to the District Councils would be submitted to the early consideration of the House. My right hon. Friend who conducted the Bill with marked ability and conciliation will reintroduce that measure as soon as engagements will permit. We shall redeem our engagement. I am not aware of any other point which requires an answer.

MR. GLADSTONE: Will the District Councils Bill precede the Scotch Bill?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir, it will not. We think that our engagement to Scotland to introduce the Local Government Bill for Scotland stands first, and we shall introduce it without delay. This measure has received the favourable consideration of Scotch Members on both sides of the House, and I trust it will

not occupy much time. I venture to express the hope that this debate will proceed on such lines as will enable us to come to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle; then we may proceed with the consideration of the question of the government of Ireland free from all other matters contained in the Speech, and finally the House can arrive at such a decision as it may deem fit.

*Mr. T. R. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I venture thus early to intervene with a few words upon a subject that has been but distantly alluded to, and my remarks have allusion not to what is contained in the Queen's Speech, but to what is omitted therefrom: our relations with East Africa, and particularly in regard to Zanzibar. This subject has a somewhat wider scope than the First Lord of the Treasury has attributed to it. The right hon. Gentleman referring to occurrences in the interior expressed deep regret, but he said we were not responsible for what had taken place; the Germans, he said, had acted within their rights, and the only further statement he made was that papers bearing upon these matters would be laid before Parliament in due course. But I would just call the attention of the House to these matters to show that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was very general in character and insufficient in detail. He said that, as to what had taken place in the interior of Africa, we looked on with regret, but had no responsibility, and undoubtedly that is the case. But when the right hon. Gentleman alluded to German action I do not know whether he referred to what took place on the mainland opposite Zanzibar or elsewhere. There are questions relating to what has taken place on Lake Nyanza and also in the region of the Congo State, and what is much more important, is to call attention to questions relating to Zanzibar itself and the blockade in which we are engaged jointly with Germany. There are also questions relating to Lake Nyassa and the position of affairs with Portugal, of which no mention has been made. I do not mean to say anything as to affairs in the Congo territory, or what has been taking place on Lake Nyanza or the territory of the East African Company. My remarks will be confined to the Zanzibar Blockade and to the Nyassa part of African affairs. As to the blockade, the last occasion I had for eliciting information was on the 18th December, a few days before Prorogation, when there was an indisposition to go at any length into Debate, and the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs asked that he should not be unduly pressed on this matter. If my memory serves me aright, I think we were promised that further information with regard to negotiations between France and Germany would be presented at an early date. We have had no further information, however, and are left to gather what we can as to what is going on in that part of the world from newspapers and other unofficial sources. In one or two respects, at least, the position upon the coast has changed, and we can, therefore, reconsider our relations with our colleague in the blockade. I quite agree that we have nothing to do, and ought to have nothing to do, with any military operations which the Germans may take upon the mainland; but I think it will be extremely difficult for us to continue joint action with the Germans in the blockade, and prevent the natives on the mainland from identifying us with the German operations on shore. The moment we were informed of our Government having embarked in these joint operations, the danger was foreseen, and it was pointed out that, through this proceeding on our part, our power and influence with the natives in that part of Africa would be considerably diminished, and we should be regarded as associated with the Germans in the operations which were on foot. The trade of that part of the coast is in the hands of our Indian fellow-subjects, who have suffered great loss by reason of the blockade; but the Government does not seem to have attempted to obtain redress for them. It seems to me that the fact that the German Government has embarked in a military expedition on the mainland may fairly induce Her Majesty's Government to reconsider their position. We have had evidence from various sources that, substantially, there has been little or no arrest or detention of slave-dhows, and that, so far as the suppression of the slave trade is concerned, the German-English blockade

has been productive of little good; and, considering the expenditure involved, and the risk of our being identified with the violent action of the Germans and others on the mainland, and the risk of misunderstanding with the French Power upon that coast, I think Her Majesty's Government may very well consider whether it is not possible for this country to withdraw from its ambiguous position in regard to the blockade. The blockade has been manifestly useless for the purpose for which we entered upon it; therefore I think we may look forward to being able, at no late date, to withdraw from our ambiguous position. With regard to the share of the Portuguese in the blockade, they appear to be blockading the southern part of the East African coast, and the Government appears to have given a *quasi* acknowledgement of the extension to the Rovuma on the north of the Portuguese possessions. If this is so, it seems to me that Her Majesty's Government have taken a very serious step indeed, and have departed from the contention hitherto maintained by the British authorities at home, that the limit of Portuguese territory on the north did not extend beyond Cape Delgado. Then, to turn to another point. I should like to elicit some information as to the events taking place in the neighbourhood of Lake Nyassa, as we are not in possession of such full information on the subject as we could desire. I am informed, on what I consider very good authority indeed, that Portugal has raised its flag in that region, at a place called Zomba. Her Majesty's Government ought on no account to acknowledge the validity of that action on the part of Portugal. The Under-Secretary has said that Her Majesty's Government are determined upon two things—that they will insist upon the right of entry into Africa by the Zambesi river, and that they will not acknowledge any sovereign right of Portugal in the region of Lake Nyassa. If we acknowledge and submit to the raising of the Portuguese flag in that place we shall be going back on the public statements of responsible Ministers, and be practically handing over to Portugal the power of controlling all free right of access to our settlements in that country. I think we are entitled to insist on Her Majesty's Government giving a specific pledge that the Zambesi and its tributaries shall be kept open as a means of access to all nations to the interior of Africa, and particularly to Lakes Nyassa and Tanganyika. It is of the greatest importance to missionary and commercial enterprises in that part of Africa that this, which is the natural inlet into the territory, should be kept open to all nations of the world. There are plenty of precedents in the history of diplomacy for taking action such as I venture to recommend. There are many other rivers under international control. This is a vast, rich territory, with an immense future before it, and it should not be out of the scope of our diplomacy, for the purpose of protecting and developing British missionary and commercial enterprises, to take immediate steps to effect the object I suggest. There is a further question as to the settlements around Lake Nyassa itself. Upon this subject we are somewhat wanting in information. All we know is, that Her Majesty's subjects at the North-West corner of Nyassa have not yet succeeded in reopening communications with Lake Tanganyika, though they have been enabled to maintain their ground on the west side of Lake Nyassa. I am here to strongly press upon Her Majesty's Government that if they go on with what appears to be their toleration of the encroachments of the Portuguese, and of the assertion on the part of the Portuguese of "territorial rights" in the interior, as well as the establishment of Portuguese custom-houses at the junction of the Zambesi and its tributaries—if Her Majesty's Government are blind to such steps as Portugal is taking in this direction, then the position of our missionary and our commercial stations in Lakes Tanganyika and Nyassa will be very seriously affected indeed, and it may be impossible for Her Majesty's subjects to further develop that which they have by their enterprise already established. The matter is one deserving the especial consideration of Her Majesty's Government, particularly the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman in particular for this reason. These missionary and commercial enterprises were first opened up by Scotchmen, and

have been mainly developed by Scotchmen. No doubt these settlements have been the most prosperous establishments in that part of the world. There has been no introduction of the liquor traffic there, such as has been so prejudicial in many other settlements we have established. We can look upon the settlements founded here as of a very legitimate kind indeed, and I think that it would ill become Her Majesty's Government, who are entrusted with the interests of our country in all parts of the world, to be remiss or blind to anything affecting the position and safety of our settlements in this part of Africa, and of absolute free access to them from the seaboard. I venture to make these few remarks, because, undoubtedly, it was a matter of great surprise to me, and it will be a matter of great surprise to others, that this, which is a matter relating to foreign affairs of the greatest interest, and which stands in a most critical position, is entirely omitted from Her Majesty's Speech. I would press the right hon. Gentleman (the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs) to put us, at as early a date as possible, in possession of further information, and I would call his attention to the extreme interest felt in the question by the people of Scotland.

*COLONEL EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I wish to make a few observations on the following passage contained in the gracious Speech from the Throne:—

"The unceasing expenditure upon warlike preparation which has been incurred by other European nations has rendered necessary an increase in the precautions which have hitherto been taken for the safety of our shores and our commerce."

I am glad to see that Her Majesty's Government have at length recognised the position we are in, having regard to the enormous armaments of continental nations. An immense change has come over our foreign neighbours in this respect of late years. Their armies are now numbered by millions where, a few years ago, they were only numbered by hundreds and thousands, and it therefore seems to me imperative, looking at our peculiar position, that we should strengthen our forces, both naval and miiltary. In former times, in what has been called *juventus mundi*, our forefathers were in the habit of drawing inferences in favour of peace or war from the flight of birds, but in these less imaginative days we find indications in the state of the money market. When the Funds of a foreign nation drop we have every reason to believe that there are causes behind that induce a feeling of insecurity. But even then we may be deceived, and twenty-four hours before the outbreak of the Franco-German war Foreign Office experts asserted that at no time had there been a more peaceful aspect throughout the Continent. Within forty-eight hours, however, the most gigantic war of the century commenced. We have no reason to assume that what occurred at that time will not be repeated, therefore, much as we may deplore that civilization at the end of the nineteenth century employs its arts and expends large sums of money in elaborating the means for destroying human life, it is necessary we should be prepared with the means of defence for Great Britain, and the equally or more important greater Britain beyond these island shores. For the last forty years our belief, whether rightly or wrongly I will not stop to argue, has been to depend almost entirely on foreign imports for the necessaries of life, and in proportion to this dependence we should increase the means of protecting our water ways. Comparison with foreign navies should not be by number of ships or amount of tonnage, but we should have in view the naval work to be done. In addition to our own water ways we have our colonies to protect, and we must remember that we have to send our troops out to the continent of India. The only way we can help our army there is by sending troops by way of the Suez Canal or round the Cape of Good Hope, and we must remember that the former of these was a doubtful passage, seeing that the sinking of a single ship in the Canal would stop all naval communication for weeks, and possibly for months. Therefore, in time of war we may have to rely on the Cape route, and upon large transport ships in the foreign stations, ships which will have to be relieved from year to year; and in these days of steam it is necessary that we should have coaling stations in different parts of the world. It ought to be distinctly laid down, therefore, what is ex-

pected of our Navy; and it would be false economy if we failed to put ourselves in such a position that we might feel ourselves safe from the combination of any two Great Maritime Powers on the Continent. I never have believed, and never shall, in the actual invasion of this country. I think the system of attack will be to cut off our food supply; and, unfortunately, it is the fact—and at no time except just after the harvest—is there more than six months' provisions in the country. Therefore the cutting off of our water way would mean the starvation of the working classes. I believe that whatever sum of money Government may demand from the country for providing adequate means of defence will be cheerfully and willingly given. At no time more than the present during the last thirty years has there been a general feeling throughout the country that it is necessary to do something for the defences of the country. Before I sit down there is another point to which reference is made in Her Majesty's Speech to which I should like to make reference. We are told that provision is to be made for Local Government in Scotland. I am glad that the Government are going to extend the immense advantages to Scotland which have accrued to England from the Local Government Bill of last year. It is impossible to exaggerate the amount of interest which has been taken in the Local Government Bill of last year by all classes of the people, and especially by the working classes. I believe that in the future wise measures of this kind will greatly tend to strengthen the constitution of the country. I am told that more than a hundred Peers of the Realm have been elected upon the County Councils, and I believe that the position of the House of Lords will be enormously strengthened in consequence. Then, again, a very large number of Magistrates have been elected; and I am certain that their experience will be of the utmost value in the new experiment which is about to be tried in reference to Local Government. I am satisfied that the extension of Local Government to Scotland will have the same beneficial effects as in England; and I may add that it will have this additional advantage—it will bring home, day by day, to the working classes the duties which devolve upon them as citizens. In former times, in my own division, the working classes took little interest even in Parliamentary elections before they obtained the suffrage, and they are now looking with deep interest to the importance of the votes which have been entrusted to them.

*MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I desire, Sir, to offer a few words with regard to the omission from the Queen's Speech of all reference to the Education question as it relates to England and Wales. This I consider to be a very serious defect. I would point out that we have had two very important Commissions on Educational questions within the last two years — one of which was the Technical Education Commission, which collected a most valuable body of evidence, and whose recommendations have been before the country for several years, although up to the present moment they have never been acted upon by the Legislature. Besides this, we have had in two Speeches from the Throne references to the subject of technical education, and still no beneficial result has been brought about, while this year all allusion to the question has been ignored. When we consider how the people of this country are suffering from the competition of Germany and other countries in which technical education is promoted, I feel sure there will be a feeling of great disappointment throughout this country if nothing should be done during the present year in the shape of legislation upon this subject. I would also call attention to another, and an equally important, Commission which reported last year—I allude to the great Royal Commission on elementary education. We never had a stronger Commission, nor one which took greater pains to collect evidence, or which has reported with greater force, clearness, and ability. Their report covers some 400 pages, and the Blue Book in which it is printed contains an enormous mass of important information. With many of the suggestions made by the Commission all friends of education must agree, and I am happy to think it is not the intention of the Government to legislate on any of those questions which would disturb the settlement arrived at in 1870, and which was accepted by the country. I wish, however, to call attention to the great

number of important recommendations made by the Elementary Education Commission of a non-contentious character which have been ignored to this day; but which, if carried out, would give an immense impetus to elementary education in this country. For the last year or two the elementary teachers have all been on the *qui vive*, expecting that those recommendations were to be acted upon, while the whole of the School Boards and other educational authorities have been anticipating that important legislation would follow. It will, therefore, be a grievous disappointment if the present Session should be barren of legislation on this important subject. We all admit the great defects of the existing system; it is far too bookish, too little practical, and involves so much examination and cram that it has become hateful to the children, who are so forced and driven that when they have once left school nothing will induce them to return to it. It is well known that we have to a great extent been working on wrong lines in this country, and when this matter has been thoroughly investigated and these important recommendations have been formulated by a competent authority, legislative action ought to be taken upon them. Why should we allow the present year to pass without securing the advantages put before us in these recommendations? One of the statements in the Commissioners' Report to which I wish to call special attention, is that the great mass of children leave school at far too early an age; and the recommendation is made that the exemption from school attendance should not go lower than the age of thirteen—that is to say, that all children should be compelled to attend school up to the age of thirteen, while the half-time period should be raised from the age of ten to that of eleven. This I regard as a most important matter, because at present there can be no doubt that the children leave school when they are far too young—in many places when they are only eleven or twelve years old—the result being that they forget almost everything they have learned, and, as can be seen among the poor children of our large towns, lapse in many cases almost to the condition of savages. In fact, the condition of the children in the slums of our large towns is a positive disgrace to the country, and I never return here from abroad without being struck by the numbers of ragged, destitute children idling about in the streets, and learning nothing but mischief. It is this that is in reality the foundation of the large amount of destitution which is prevalent in London and many of our great towns, the poorer children after leaving school being allowed to run about the streets almost wild. In Germany it is entirely different. There the children are compelled to attend school till they are fourteen, and after that they have to attend the evening schools till they have reached the age of seventeen, the result being that in that country you see no such hordes of ill-conditioned children as are found in our large English towns. Surely this is a matter vital to the well-being of the country, and one which the Legislature ought to try and remedy. Another class of recommendations is contained in the Report signed by the minority portion of the Commissioners in favour of the establishment of evening continuation schools. The evidence as to the necessity of this has come in overwhelming proportions from all parts of the country. The old evening schools have largely died out; whereas before the year 1870 they were well attended. The fact is that the Act of 1870 laid down so many conditions for the evening schools that it had the effect of almost strangling them. Most of them had died out up to two years ago, but since then the Recreative Schools Association has to some extent succeeded in reviving the attendance of the children, so that now these schools contain somewhere about 40,000 pupils. But what is this number compared with the four and a-half millions on the books of the elementary schools? We ought to have at least half a million in regular attendance at evening schools, and if in this country we did what is done in Germany, Switzerland, and other countries, we should have that number or more, instead of allowing so many to run wild and be exposed to the corrupting influence of all sorts of evil associations. If we wish to attack at its roots the problem of destitution and want of employment in this country, caused by so large a number of our people having no real education and no trade, we must adopt the

recommendation of the Royal Commission, and establish a national system of evening continuation schools, in which the attendance should be made obligatory up to 15 or 16 years of age. For my part, I believe that no Government could confer a greater blessing on the country than the Government which succeeds in successfully grappling with this important question. I have taken the pains to make considerable inquiry into the subject, and I find that the working-classes are practically unanimous in their desire for continuation evening schools. I may mention that no fewer than 5,000 memorials are in process of signing, and will be sent up to the Prime Minister and the Education Department, in favour of this system, and, as far as I know, not a single Trades Union has objected to the recommendation. The fact is, that the period in which education proves to be of the greatest value is after children leave school, say from 12 to 17, when character is being formed. Up to the age of 12 children have not the intelligence which would enable them to understand the uses of education, whereas, during the years which elapse from 12 to 16 or 17 you may sow the seeds either of a good and useful career, or of a useless and disreputable one. I ask, therefore, that this House should take up and deal with this question, and that, instead of paying so much attention to affairs in every other part of the world, we should look at home and see what we can do to remedy the sad deficiencies of our educational system. For these reasons I greatly regret that the Government have given no place to this important subject in the Speech from the Throne. I am sure that there is felt throughout the country an amount of interest in this matter of which many here have no conception, and that if the present Government shrinks from dealing with it, from mistaken notions of economy, they will only leave to their successors the honour and glory of passing a measure which will confer inestimable blessings on the children of this country. I believe that false ideas of economy have much to do with the present position of matters. We are told that ten millions of money, or some other large sum, is to be asked for the construction of ironclads and the increase of our armaments, and I am one of those who would not object to any expenditure that is proved to be necessary for the proper defence of the country; but I believe that better and far more lasting results can be obtained from the improved education of our people and in properly training our children at that critical period when so many of them go astray. An expenditure for such a purpose would be one that would bring about the richest possible reward. Let us grant that it would add half a million to the burdens of the country. The amount is hardly worth talking about, especially when we remember that few countries spend so small a proportion of their revenue on national education as England, which certainly expends in this way far less than France, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and the United States do relatively to the income of those countries. By spending the amount I have mentioned, you will be certain hereafter to reap the benefit of it ten, twenty, and even fifty times told. And, Sir, I should not only like to see evening continuation schools established, but I should also like them to be free schools; in fact, I should like to see all our elementary education made free, as is now the case in most of the civilized countries of the world. In connection with this question, I cannot forbear alluding to the cognate subject of Welsh intermediate education, to which I am sorry to see the Government have made no reference in the Queen's Speech. They are aware that we have had Bill after Bill on this subject brought before Parliament for several years past; and, also, that the people of Wales feel the strongest and deepest interest in it. Wales is greatly in need of Imperial aid for the creation of a more complete system of high-class schools, and the Welsh people have been deeply disappointed year after year by the neglect of this question, on which their hearts are so firmly set. I think the matter is one on which the Government might be reasonably expected to meet the representatives of Wales halfway, without any sacrifice of principle on their part. Of course, I can hardly expect that a Conservative Government will take any step in the direction of Welsh Disestablishment. The question will only be settled when a Liberal Government comes into power. But we

may expect them to do something for the Welsh people in the way of higher education, especially when they know the amount of discontent which exists on account of the neglect of Welsh questions generally. If the Government could only meet them half-way, by conceding what they ask in the matter of education, they would do something towards allaying the discontent which is prevalent in regard to other questions. Apologising to the House for having occupied so much more time than I had intended, I will conclude by expressing a hope that this Session will not be allowed to end without the passage of some useful measures of social legislation—legislation that will touch the hearts and consciences of the people, and which I am persuaded is earnestly desired by the country at large.

*Sir RICHARD TEMPLE: I had no intention of intervening in this debate, and should not have done so but for the remarks which have just fallen from the hon. Member opposite (Mr. S. Smith). I feel that some reply, however slight, ought to be given from these benches. In the first place, I must renew the tribute I have often paid to the zeal and earnestness evinced by the hon. Gentleman on the subject of education generally, and on certain branches of it in particular. There is no hon. Member of this House who has greater claims to respect, not only from this own side, but from both sides of the House, for his efforts in the cause of education, than the hon. Member. He not only preaches, but he also practises the doctrine he enunciates. The hon. Gentleman has complained that the subject of education has been omitted from the Queen's Speech. I may state that I am no more in the secrets of the Government than he; but I can readily imagine that in the crowded state of public business there are many useful measures they would gladly propose, but which they would not be able to carry out during the present session. It may be the intention of the Government to carry out by executive action some of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Education. But if there is any difficulty in legislation the hon. Member has himself supplied one reason at least. He has referred to the question of free schools. There is no better way of applying the torch to the combustible embers of controversy on the subject of education than by urging the question of free schools. Surely he must know this raises up the whole controversy between the voluntary and national system on the one side and the Board School system, which I unworthily represent, on the other. He speaks of free education. Well, that, probably is at the bottom of the difficulty in legislation; certainly it is as regards elementary education. But when he speaks in such terms of moving pathos about the numbers of poor parents who are dragged, in his imagination, before the magistrates by the School Board officers for not sending their children to school because they could not pay the school fees, let me assure him that that is a picture which is greatly exaggerated, because parents in the position thus described are not taken before the magistrates, for the school fees of their children are remitted. The difficulty in respect to the free system does not, in fact, concern the poor, but concerns the class above them and the lower middle class. Once fees are abolished, it will be very difficult to exclude the middle classes from the benefit of that principle, and then the question will arise whether we are to have the middle class educated at the cost of the ratepayers at large. Well, there are large classes in this country who think otherwise—who hold the doctrine that the first duty of an independent Englishman is to pay for the education of his own children, so far as he can. Those who plead this doctrine of free education, in the manner adopted by my hon. Friend, quite forget that the greater part of the cost of elementary education is paid for by the public already. We have made a recent calculation in London, and it shows that at this moment eleven-twelfths of the cost of elementary education in the metropolitan area is defrayed by the ratepayers, so that, with all the talk of hardship in levying the fees, only one-twelfth of the actual cost of elementary education falls upon the parents. There is thus no grievance whatever. One can readily understand why the Government should hesitate to set aflame the embers of the educational controversy which my hon. Friend wishes to stir up. Apart from legislation, we might have some of the matters which my hon. Friend has indicated dealt with by executive action. In a revised Code,

for instance, we might have payment by results much softened and greatly modified in the way which the teachers, both of Board and voluntary schools, greatly desire. Then, in regard to continuation schools, my hon. Friend, in his philanthropic zeal and enthusiasm, has again allowed himself to be drawn into the vortex of exaggeration. My hon. Friend makes the most astonishing statement, that our great cities are swarming with poor, uneducated children, who wander about the streets in idleness and neglect. But is it not the fact that one great reason why parents in both town and country object to the compulsory clauses of the Education Act is, that they want their children to work, in order to eke out the family's subsistence? And in the towns the children earn a certain pittance and livelihood for themselves out of school hours. The truth is, the children are urgently required not only for domestic duties at home, but actually to earn something towards the family purse; and I appeal if this is not a truer description of the real facts of the case than that given by my hon. Friend. That being so, what becomes of the superstructure of my hon. Friend? But apart from that particular argument, I cordially endorse the principle of my hon. Friend's remarks. I earnestly support him in his warm contention, and I hold it is a matter of great national importance that we should have a system of continuation schools. My hon. Friend says that evening classes in England have died out. I say they certainly have not died out in the metropolitan area, for which I am responsible, because there are more evening classes, better organised and better attended, than anything of the kind which has existed before. The London School Board began that system about six years ago; they have been gradually working it out, and I doubt not that Birmingham, Manchester, and other large towns are doing, or certainly could be got to do, a similar work. My hon. Friend entered into some general statistics as to the numbers likely to attend the continuation classes. But when he gives large round numbers I think he should be reminded that the proper basis of calculation is the number of children that leave school annually. Now the number of children who leave the London Board schools annually is about 40,000, and in the voluntary schools about 25,000, and if we can obtain a certain modification in the Code, it is quite possible they might be able within a very few years to secure an attendance at the evening classes not far short of 40,000. My hon. Friend has spoken of half a million attending these evening classes throughout the country. That is a very high computation.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I think we ought to have half a million in attendance at our evening classes, providing that the account may range from 13 to 16 years. Remember we have four and a half millions under school age.

*SIR RICHARD TEMPLE: It appears to me to be a very high figure, but at this short notice I am not able to check the calculation. But supposing it is half a million, we must look at the question of the cost. In my opinion the cost would not be excessive, provided we did not adopt the doctrine of free education. At this moment the number of continuation schools in London probably costs the local rates and the Government together something over 10s. a scholar, perhaps 12s., so that half a million of scholars might be arranged for at a cost of about a quarter of a million sterling. That is of course a manageable sum, but once the principle of free education is adopted, the cost would be excessive, and then we should have an educational burden indeed. I venture to warn my hon. Friend that the educational burden is beginning to be felt very heavily both in town and country, and any attempt to increase it would cause great dissatisfaction. If evening schools are to be made successful, the curriculum must be at once improved, and why that has not been done I cannot understand. A year or two ago a memorial was presented to my right hon. Friend the Minister of Education from the London School Board suggesting alterations and improvements which could have been carried out by a wave of my right hon. Friend's hand or a stroke of his masterly pen. But we were told we must wait the Report of the Royal Commission. We have that Report now, I entreat my right hon. Friend to give the modifications asked for, and if that is done I will undertake within a year or two to

double the evening schools. Parents say that if they are obliged to send their children to evening schools after 14 or 15 they ought to be relieved from compulsory attendance for their children after 11. I submit that instead of pressing for measures which might be unpopular, and which might or might not be passed, School Boards throughout the country should lose no time in applying their shoulders to the wheel, as the London School Board is doing. While Parliament is discussing the matter, and hon. Members are making fine speeches, the School Board of London is acting, and I hope all School Boards throughout the country will do the same. Lastly, my hon. Friend has done very scant justice to our country when he compares it so unfavourably with other countries. The audited expenditure upon schools in Great Britain may be less than in Germany or France, but it should be remembered that no record is kept of the magnificent system of voluntary instruction, most honourable and creditable to all who take part in it. That system derives its strength from a fountain of benevolence and good feeling which has never dried up, and which has produced educational results by private enterprise, to which no parallel can be found in any other nation. I venture to say that if an account were kept of the expenditure upon education by private and voluntary agents, together with that from public resources, England would compare favourably with any other nation under the sun.

*Sir WILLIAM HART-DYKE: I think that, considering the deep interest which my hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire takes in this question, it would be scarcely courteous on my part to allow this occasion to pass without saying one or two words. He complains that there is no mention of the Education question in the Queen's Speech. Well, Sir, I believe that complaint has already been made by the leader of the House that too many questions are mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and, Sir, if I have not mentioned the educational question to my colleagues and urged them to include it in the Speech from the Throne, it is not for one instant because I underrate its importance, or by any desire to shirk the responsibilities which lie upon me in regard to it, but because I have been too many years in the House, and never took too sanguine a view of the probability of fulfilling the promises made in gracious Speeches from the Throne. It is better to carry out some important educational reforms which have not been promised than to promise what the Government might not be able to accomplish. My hon. Friend must remember that educational reforms have not in the past been restricted to legislative proposals, and must be aware that very important reforms have been carried into effect under the revised code. Although in Her Majesty's gracious Speech there is no distinct promise with respect to this question, I can assure my hon. Friend that for many months past I and my colleagues have been carefully considering the proposals of the Royal Commission, and I hope before long to lay on the table a code which will contain most important modifications of our educational system. I am not in a position, however, to pledge myself further, except with regard to the distinct promise given by the First Lord of the Treasury, that the Government will this year endeavour to grapple with technical education. My hon. Friend opposite must be aware that there is great difficulty in dealing with this question in regard to elementary schools, looking upon it merely as an advantage to be gained by board schools over voluntary schools in conneciton with the rates. I am not prepared to argue the question now, but the difficulty is one which I hope by patience and compromise to overcome. Both my hon. Friends have referred to a question in which I take the deepest interest—that of continuation or evening schools, and I hope to be able to do something to promote them. The whole question of these schools has been for some time under careful consideration, and although I am not able to promise any legislation on the subject, I will promise that in the coming code measures shall be taken with a view to giving them greater freedom. I will also promise that any Bill on the subject introduced by his hon. Friend or other hon. Members shall receive careful and candid consideration. I trust I have shown that although the education question is not mentioned in the Queen's Speech, yet the Government has not neglected its duties in this regard.

*MR. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.): No doubt, so far as the people of this country are concerned, one of the most important subjects for consideration is that of education, as to which an interesting discussion has just taken place, but turning to the Queen's Speech we find mentioned another subject of great importance both to the House and the country, namely, the proposal for an increased expenditure upon the defences of the country, of which we have up to the present time no estimate whatever. But, as on a former occasion, I made a protest, I now desire to repeat my protest against this expenditure upon what are called the defences of the country. I want to know where the cry for this increased expenditure comes from. I see in the leading journal of the country day after day long letters from Admirals and other naval gentlemen, and from military gentlemen, informing us of the defenceless state of the country and of the dangerous state we are in, but even that is nothing new. We have always had this put before us, and almost precisely in the same words as at present, and it will go on so to the end of the chapter. But after one of these outbreaks of panic and scare we have a large amount of money voted by the House of Commons and spent upon ships of war and materials of war, and then a few months elapse and the same story is repeated, and the country is assured of its utterly defenceless state. We are told in Her Majesty's gracious Speech of the warlike preparations on the Continent, and that we are to follow suit, but when we go to the country and listen to what we are taught, at any rate by our Christian religion — namely, "Peace on earth and goodwill to men"—we realise that the object of a great Christian nation should be to limit these armaments and not to imitate the great military nations of the Continent. There is not a word in the Speech upon that point. All we are told is that a large expenditure of money is to be made on the Continent and that this country is to do the same thing. But when we have spent this money how much better shall we be? We shall build ships, and every ship will involve a great expenditure of money in materials and men. It rather reminds me, as a householder, of the fact that when a man increased his household he had really to engage one servant to look after another, and so if we get more ships of war we shall involve ourselves in more expenditure to assist the ships to do their work. There is, in fact, no end or limit to such expenditure. And then, to accentuate the position, we are told we are a country dependent on our supplies of food from abroad. That is quite correct, but then we have an enormous mercantile marine, very different to what we had in former days. That marine is now almost exclusively composed of steamers, and, connected as I am with a firm which carries more food and produce for the people than any other firm connected with the mercantile marine, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that in almost any circumstances the mercantile marine of this country will be able to supply the country with food. We are told it is not necessary for the enemy to land a single soldier on the shores of this country, but that we will simply be starved out in so many days or weeks. Such statements are repeated year after year on the opposite side of the House. We have also one or two hon. and gallant Gentlemen on this side of the House who endorse the same view, but these hon. Gentlemen are not luckily so numerous on the Opposition as on the Ministerial benches. On behalf of the mercantile community, and also on behalf of the taxpaying community of this country, I wish to make a protest against this scare and outcry for increased Army and Navy expenditure. In Ireland we have 30,000 men employed to keep Ireland in order, and that is almost the entire portion of the British Army available for Foreign Service, and quite sufficient too, for the less England has to do with Continental complications the better; but instead of being able to take these men out of Ireland, where they are now doing police duty, we would have to pay for a large additional body of men. That is one symptom of what will be the result of increasing our expenditure. As far as the Navy is concerned, I have seen the statement that all the old men-of-war should now have new engines put into them for the purposes of Coast defence. Many of these matters are matters of detail, into which there is not the time to enter; but I must solemnly protest against the expenditure which

the Government are about to place upon the taxpaying portion of the community, and which I regard as entirely unnecessary. I believe the expenditure already made upon the Navy would, if properly and economically used, and used with common sense, be more than sufficient for all the purposes of defence, not only of the shores but of the mercantile marine. I would not hesitate to stand before any commercial community, and announce exactly this same view, and though, perhaps, it is always popular to raise a cry of the country in danger and to call out for more expenditure upon the Army and Navy, it is the duty, at any rate of those on the Liberal side of the House, to protest, and let our protest be endorsed as far as possible by the taxpayers of the country.

MR. MARK J. STEWART (Kirkcudbright): The hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) has introduced the subject of education, and I desire to say a few words from the point of view from which I regard the matter. My experience, and I have had a great deal in rural districts of Scotland, as Chairman of a large School Board, is that at the present moment there is a very great desire on the part of the parents to have their children better educated than they are in the Board Schools in Scotland. They do not blame the teachers. The teachers do their best, but the time at their disposal is so very limited that it is impossible for them to devote any real time to the teaching of higher education. Of course Board Schools are in the main intended to supply the mere rudiments of education, but that has never been held sufficient for Scotch children. The result is, that instead of improving scholarship in Scotland, the present School Board system has deteriorated it. The system is no doubt an immense boon to the greater number of children, but for those children who are most anxious to make progress it has a very bad effect. It does not offer any real incentive or stimulus to the prosecution of matters which such children are expected to learn in after life, and under such circumstances, in view of the competition in foreign nations in matters requiring real technical education, we shall very soon find that our children are a long way behind. It has been said to-night that there is a strong aversion on the part of parents to keep their children at school even as long as they are now required to do, and that if you supplement the system by evening schools that aversion would perhaps be even too strong to overcome. I do not see the point of that at all. My belief is that all the children might be taken from school at twelve instead of thirteen; they could at once go to the evening schools, and there obtain much greater knowledge than they would if they continued at the elementary schools another year or so. There is, no doubt, a strong aversion to burdening the rates in any way whatever; that would be resented not only by the parents, but, generally speaking, by the whole of the community. But what has been suggested elsewhere, and what, I think, is only a fair suggestion, is that the nation should take its part in educating the children of the country. It is false economy to say we cannot afford to do it. I would much rather spend more money on education than on the defence of the country, though I think that expenditure on both objects is essentially needful at the present time. I rejoice to learn from the Queen's Speech that the Government have not abandoned the intention to establish a Department of Agriculture. I trust that what has been done by dairy schools will be continued in other directions, so that to the fullest extent science will be brought to bear upon agriculture, in the production of better crops and such improvements as are necessary to enable our farmers to meet the foreign competition which they have to face.

SIR DONALD CURRIE (Perth W.): My hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. C. H. Wilson) has protested against the action proposed by the Government in regard to the defence of the Empire. Although my hon. Friend is one of the largest shipowners in the country, I hardly think he represents the mercantile shipping opinion of the country when he declares that the merchant shipping community are unfavourable to the proposed expenditure. I hold the very contrary. No menace to other Powers is intended: all that is made is a declaration that there is a necessity for precaution to be taken. It is said in the Speech, "The

increasing expenditure upon warlike preparations which has been incurred by other European nations has rendered necessary an increase in the precautions which have hitherto been taken for the safety of our shores and our commerce." I hold that we require this expenditure for the protection of the Channel; for the defence of our position in the Channel it is absolutely necessary to have a largely increased Fleet. For the protection of the carrying trade of the country such a Fleet is absolutely essential, though you would find that steamers of ten knots an hour, which carry grain in such large proportions to this country, would have very little employment under the British flag if we were at war with a large and important foreign Power. Further, I hold that for the defence of the Colonies an increased fleet is essential. I entertain the strongest opinion that we are utterly unable to compete against a combination of any two Powers such as might occur. The present, however, is not the time to enter into detail; an opportunity of doing so will shortly arrive. In the meantime, I answer the protest of my hon. Friend by an equally strong disclaimer.

MR. W. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory): I think I may fairly congratulate the Government on the form of Her Majesty's Speech. It is slightly more original than usual. Some of the old worn phrases have been dropped, and, altogether, the Speech is a fairly readable document. But when I pass from the form to the various subjects touched upon, I cannot be equally laudatory. There is, as usual, a statement as to the condition of affairs at home and abroad, and there is an enumeration of the measures which the Government intend to submit to Parliament. The allusion in the Speech to foreign affairs is singularly brief. We are told that the relations with Foreign Powers continue to be friendly, but I think we are bound to ask whether these relations are on a permanent basis of security. I gather from an allusion later on in the Speech, that the Government have some misgivings on this point. Personally, I think that the relations between this country and the United States are by no means so satisfactory as those who really wish for the well-being of both countries desire. There is the Fishery question between Canada and the United States, which is not yet settled, and I cannot altogether congratulate the Government on the way in which they have manag d the negotiations. The Government sent to the United States as their representative in the negotiations the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain). It no doubt occurred to the Government that the right hon. Gentleman was a very clever intriguer, and that he might possibly turn his talents against them. The right hon. Gentleman had intrigued against a former colleague of his, the late Mr. Forster; he had intrigued with the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), he had intrigued against the hon. Member for Cork; he had intrigued with Captain O'Shee, he had intrigued with the *Times*, and no doubt it occurred to our sagacious rulers that it would be a good thing to find employment for him, lest he should intrigue against them. Accordingly, they employed him on this mission. It at first appeared that the experiment would be successful. The right hon. gentleman was fêted, speeches very complimentary to this country were made by distinguished Americans, and the right hon. Gentleman was congratulated upon the work he had done, not only by his allies and friends, but even by some of his opponents. But a few months passed, and when the time arrived for the ratification of the Convention which had been drawn up between the United States and this country, the Senate of the United States threw the thing up, and almost all the labours of the right hon. Gentleman proved in vain. Why did they prove in vain? Because of the feeling entertained towards the right hon. Gentleman by the Irish race. If the Government had had sufficient sagacity to send a man who was not hated as the right hon. Gentleman unfortunately is by the Irish race at home and abroad, the probability is the negotiations would have taken a different turn. I hope there is one lesson which the country will learn fr »m this failure, and that is, that until you satisfy the demand of Ireland there will always be in America an element of disturbance, an element which you will have to reckon with more or less. Then we are entitled to ask, with regard to foreign affairs,

whether we have "Peace with Honour," a phrase which hon. Gentlemen opposite were once so fond of using. Have the Governme t shown any care or tender regard for the honour of this country? Your Ambassador was returned his papers and sent away from the United States because of his interference in domestic politics in that country, and yet I cannot find that one word of remonstrance was addressed to the American Government, or that this spirited Government took the smallest means of showing that an affront had been offered to this country. Again, a very odious charge has been brought within the last month or two against the gentleman who now represents this country at St. Petersburg. The charge was of the basest nature, and I don't believe it. It was made in a most offensive manner, and yet I cannot find that the Government made any remonstrance. I cannot find that there was anything like a manly, outspoken expression of indignation on the part of the Government at the treatment of their representative. There is an instructive lesson in all this. Some of us have watched carefully the public character and career of the Prime Minister, and have fancied at times that we noticed in him a disposition to bully the weak and to truckle to the strong. I am afraid the same disposition has been manifested lately. Where the strongest Governments are concerned, there is nothing like a manly, outspoken assertion of English rights, but when the Irish Members are to be insulted, or the people of India are to be insulted, because they are supposed to be weak, there is plenty of strong language used by the head of the Government. Coming to home affairs, we are brought face to face with the eternal question of Ireland. What have you, since the House rose, been doing in that country, and what have you to show as the result of your action? You have imprisoned for six months, with hard labour, an hon. Friend of mine, well-known for his moderate and reasonable speeches in this House. You have imprisoned him for publishing in his paper a speech he delivered, at what you are pleased to call, a suppressed branch of the Irish National League. Removing him from the gaol in which he was confined to the Fortress of Tullamore, you carried him on an outside car in prison dress, through the streets of his native town, without an overcoat, and then you put him in a third-class railway carriage. My hon. Friend is as well known, and as much respected among his own people and constituents as any Metropolitan member is in this city. You thought to degrade him, but in truth you raised him in the estimation of his countrymen. The admiration we had for him as a journalist and a Member, has deepened into respect and affection since your persecution of him. I need not go over the treatment of my hon. friend, the Member for North Cork. That gentleman does not think he ought to be treated as a common criminal, but the Chief Secretary, who could not meet my hon. friend on the floor of this House, and who felt the great injury his cause suffered from the speeches of my hon. Friend, employed warders to strip my hon. Friend by force, notwithstanding everyone knew the delicacy of his constitution, which, indeed, is stamped upon his features. If you subsequently changed your treatment, and restored him his habiliments, you did so not from any feeling of humanity, but in deference to the storm of indignation raised throughout the country. Then how have you acted towards my friend, as I am proud to call him, Father McFadden of Gweedore? You sent to arrest him immediately after mass, in the midst of his admiring flock. No priest is more beloved, or more deserving of the love of the population. He is widely known for his philanthropy, his humanity, and his efforts to promote the industry and comfort of his people. This priest you sent a District Inspector to arrest after mass, when the people were strongly under the influence of their affection for their pastor, and you are surprised at the fatality that resulted! You have actually the audacity to insult Father McFadden, and the whole priesthood of Ireland, with a charge of complicity in murder! Is such a proceeding in the interest of law and order you profess yourselves so anxious to preserve? What have you gained by this display of force, this austerity, this cruelty in Ireland? We may form a tolerable notion of what the Government think they have gained from a speech delivered by the Chief Secretary to a small number of Unionists. The right hon. Gentleman discovered a

great improvement in the material condition of Ireland because deposits in Irish Savings Banks had greatly increased, and this he assumed was entirely due to the firm policy of the Government. But I should have thought the veriest tyro in Irish affairs would attribute this to a very different and less high-flown cause. There has been a great increase in the price of stock, enabling farmers to put by more money than heretofore. The relations between the police and the people, said the Chief Secretary, were improved, and then the very next day we have this deplorable murder of a police officer at Gweedore. The right hon. Gentleman quoted statistics, at which he usually sneers, perhaps because he has no special faculty for dealing with them—they require an impartiality of mind he does not possess. Boycotting, he said, had diminished something like 70 per cent. I have always felt very sceptical as to these boycotting returns. Suppose a Government set about tabulating the number of persons boycotted by the Primrose League in this country, would not the statistics present a very different appearance prepared under the authority of right hon. Gentlemen on that side or on this? In fact, these boycotting returns may be made big or small at pleasure. They afford cover for coercive legislation, but they do not afford sufficient information to allow of verification. Then, it is said, outrages were 200 fewer in 1888 than in any year since 1879. But there the statement stops, and I attach little importance to it. Under the term outrages are included not only murder, conspiracy to murder, and manslaughter, but also threatening letters and the taking of forcible possession—an offence that means that some unfortunate wretch, driven out on the hillside in midwinter, crept back to his dwelling for shelter for himself or kin. We do not want to know if offences of this kind or threatening letters have diminished, but whether murder, and what we all recognise as serious crimes have diminished. Show us this clearly, and we may be inclined to recognize some improvement in the state of Ireland. Until then I must preserve my scepticism and conclude that all this straining of the law, all this cruelty to Irish Members, all this harshness, all these insults heaped on the priesthood of Ireland have had no compensating advantage to the side of the Government, into all this despotism with which the Government of Ireland has degenerated must go down before investigation and the light of public opinion. As to proposed litigation, we are rejoiced that proposals for local government in Scotland are to be brought forward this Session. Scotch business has been very much neglected, and the complaints of Scotch Members are amply justified. I am glad the Government are trying in a small way to repair the evil. But, I confess, my mind is not altogether easy on this subject. In years long ago, before I sat here, I used to constantly hear that Scotland was governed in accordance with the wishes of Scotch people, just as if a Parliament sat in Edinburgh; but I have long since ceased to accept such a statement. Again and again, I have seen the wishes of Scotch members set aside and overlooked by the votes of English Members holding different political views to the majority of the people of Scotland, and I am very much afraid that in this Bill some crucial question will arise, when this same thing will be repeated, and my Scotch friends will be on a purely Scotch question overvoted by English Members. Should that be so, I hope the lesson will sink deep into the hearts of the people, that never can Scotland really attain justice until a Parliament for Scotland legislates for the wishes of the people, unclogged by English votes. I observe in the Speech no promise of any Local Government Bill for Ireland, and from the point of view of an Irish Member I do not regret that for one I am absolutely convinced that no mere Local Government Scheme will satisfy the demand of the Irish people for a Legislature in Dublin. That demand would be just as strong though a Local Government Bill were passed, but the fact of the omission is worth noting, with the recollection that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite pledged themselves over and over again on the hustings and through the mouth of the noble Lord, the member for Paddington to "simultaneity," in the treatment of Great Britain and Ireland. Where is the approach to "simultaneity"? You shift this over from

session to session until you will be able to say that Parliament has no time left to deal with it. I do not envy your position when you have to explain your broken pledges to your constituents. There is promise of a Bill to develop the resources of Ireland. Now, I have thought and inquired a good deal into these Drainage Bills, and I am bound to say, that when the Chief Secretary said these Bills were opposed by us, and that because of our action they were abandoned last session, his statement is absolutely and entirely incorrect. It was not because of any action of ours, it was because the right hon. Gentleman was not in earnest that the Bills were not pressed forward. I was favourable to them myself, and only two or three of my friends expressed any hostility. But I do not think the people of Ireland attach as much importance to these Bills as the Government do. I spoke at two public meetings in two counties that are supposed to be largely affected by the drainage of one of these rivers, and I advised the people to express their opinion by resolutions at public meetings, sending a copy of the resolutions to myself or my friends, but I cannot find that one single resolution in favour of the right hon. Gentleman's Bills was passed. The fact of the matter is, that all this desire of the right hon. Gentleman to develop the resources of Ireland is a mere teacup tempest, and the people do not care about it, or want it; they would be content to wait and have the matter dealt with by their own Parliament, showing my belief that they will not have to wait many years. As to national defence I only wish to say that if defence is really your object, not picking quarrels or attacking nations who cannot oppose you, if it is really to strengthen your Navy, where that is required, I believe there will be a general disposition on the part of private members to give the Government every opportunity for developing their scheme. I do not know whether this session will be stormy or quiet, but one thing I do say, and that is that the attention of men generally will be less upon the proceedings in this House than on the results of by-elections in the country, and the preparations for that great struggle which must come when the constituencies are again appealed to. Much as I lament the sufferings of my hon. Friends, deeply as I regret the sorrows of Ireland—and there is no man feels these things more intensely than I do, or longs more earnestly for the tranquility and freedom of his country—one thing reconciles me to the contemplation of the evils of the present rule, and that is that they make clear to the meanest intelligence the issue which the country will have to try, between tyranny and enmity on the one hand, and on the other hand the extension of freedom and goodwill to Ireland. Considering these things, I have no fear for the result. I remember the words which more than a hundred years ago Edmund Burke spoke of the English people, and I do not think the English characteristics of integrity, fairness, good temper and good humour have changed.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I agree in the remarks of the hon. Member for Hull, and will only briefly supplement them. I think the danger to the country does not arise so much from foreign attack as from the crushing weight of taxation upon the people. In my belief, there is more danger to be apprehended from extravagant expenditure than from foreign foe. Therefore I ask the House to consider and hesitate before they back the Government any further in that extravagant expenditure upon which they propose to embark. Within my own recollection the military expenditure of the country has increased threefold, and yet just as expenditure has increased so has the apprehension of danger. The increase seems to breed panic, and it seems the military mind is ever possessed with the fear of destruction to the country, but I believe that destruction, if it comes, will be from that extravagant expenditure into which military opinion has led the country. It is most unfortunate that so many gentlemen who are personally interested in this expenditure have a voting influence in the decisions of the House, and this, I fear, has greatly tended to the growth of expenditure. Of one fact I would warn the House, that if there is this increase of expenditure the democracy will demand that property shall bear a much larger share of the burden. There is a tendency to imagine and to understand that the landed interest does not bear its fair share of

the burden of taxation, and the fact is becoming known that in connection with the Land Tax there has been an immense evasion of public obligations. If you want to bring this question to the front, go on increasing expenditure and soon the pressure will be so great that matters will not remain where they are. There is danger in spending money to such an enormous extent while the interests of education are neglected. My hon. Friend has shown anxiety in this direction, and there is the fact that millions suffer the direst distress from the crushing presence of daily life and yet you propose further burdens! Talk of the dangers of the Eastern question; there is more danger in the East End of London and in the condition of the populations of our large towns! Unless something drastic is done to improve the conditions under which our poorer classes live there is imminent danger in our midst, and I ask the House to pause before assenting to this proposed expenditure. A further consideration should not be left out of view, the danger to our commerce that will arise when America adopts the principle of Free Trade. When that time comes, as come it will, then will begin the struggle for the commerce of the world. So long as the United States are under the protection system we can hold our own in the commerce of the globe, but when they compete with us on equal terms they will have the advantage against us of freedom from the trammels of a heavy debt. On the part of my constituents, I enter my protest at this early stage. In regard to the condition of Ireland, I say nothing, but I am astonished that any reasonable men should advise Her Majesty to say that recent enactments have been attended there with satisfactory results. Is there anything there to give a Ministry satisfaction? Is there satisfaction in the fact that government can only be carried on by brute force? Is it possible that such a system can exist side by side with representative institutions? If you are prepared to deprive Ireland of representation you may carry it on for a time, but so far from seeing any ground for satisfaction, I see nothing but a disgraceful chapter of history England will look back upon with sorrow and regret. I would make brief reference to the subject of the abolition of the Sugar Bounties. In theory and argument I should be against the principle of bounties, but why this country should spend time and money to impress this view on the Governments of other nations, I do not understand. The effect of their policy has been to cheapen sugar for us, and I venture to think that the people will not altogether agree that the efforts of the Government have been attended with advantage. My own constituency is interested in this matter. The effect of the cheapening of sugar through the Foreign Bounty system has been that industries in which sugar forms the basis have been increased tenfold, and these effects of the Government come under the category of class legislation, and will be attended with damage to these manufactures and a tendency to increase the cost of one of the comforts of the people. On this ground I venture to challenge the opinion that has been expressed.

MR. F. H. EVANS (Southampton): We were told last autumn by the First Lord of the Admiralty that our navy was twice as strong as that of any other European power, and that it was quite able to protect our trade. It is an astounding thing, therefore, to hear to-day that it is necessary to expend a large sum of money in order to make our navy efficient and to protect our trade. If a war were to break out, the insurance companies would dictate the routes which the commerce of the country should follow, and instead of having our merchant shipping protected by the cruisers of the Admiralty we should find the commerce of the country carried on by great ocean steamers able to protect themselves. If we found ourselves unable to protect our carrying trade in the end, we should have to give it up. I therefore hope that in the course of the present discussion it may be made clear that our navy is really in a state of efficiency. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) differs with the First Lord to the extent of 50 per cent. in regard to the strength of the navy. You cannot make up a difference of 50 per cent. in the course of a few months, and I trust that the Government will explain how it is that such great differences of opinion have arisen.

*MR. R. K. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): As a Member for a Metropolitan constituency, I rise to express my regret

that the question of the housing of the industrial classes has found no place in the Queen's Speech. It must be perfectly clear to all Members who have read the report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, published in 1885, that the question is one of urgent importance. My hon. Friend the Member for Bristol referred just now to the East of London, but I must remind the House that there is a South of London and a West of London. It is well known that there are poor people living within 200 yards of the House, whose homes are a disgrace to civilization. It must not be forgotten that the question now stands upon an entirely different footing to that on which it stood in 1885. We had not then, as we have now, a thoroughly representative Municipal body for the whole of London. We have now a County Council who, if they have not already sufficient powers, should have them at once. I hope that the Government will either bring in a Bill upon the subject or give facilities for the consideration of the measure which is to be introduced by my hon. Friend the Member for Hoxton (Mr. Stuart). I have made these observations in no party spirit, but because I feel that the present condition of the dwellings of the poor is a disgrace to the country and demands immediate attention.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway County, N.): I am afraid that there is one subject which has been slurred over in the speech from the throne. The seconder of the address (Sir John Colomb) in his excellent speech made one remarkable assertion. The hon. Member sits for a Metropolitan constituency, and he dealt ably with such topics as he understands; but he certainly made an unfortunate reference to Irish matters. He spoke of law and order having been restored in Ireland. When we look around us we miss many of our colleagues who are locked up in prison or are awaiting their trial. That sort of talk might do in a Primrose Cabinet, but it is altogether absurd in the House of Commons. The Queen's Speech contains some reference to the policy of developing the material resources of Ireland. I am glad to find that the Chancellor of the Exchequer finds it necessary to do something for Ireland, and looking at the words put into the mouth of Her Majesty, we may, perhaps, assume that the policy of evasion pursued by the Government on this subject during the last two and a-half years will no longer be followed up. We were told then of the great Conservative policy of developing the resources of Ireland, but more than two years have elapsed, and absolutely nothing has been done. They said that in the first place we must have a Royal Commission. Well, we have had a Royal Commission, but it reported a year and a-half ago, and nothing has been done. The noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) made promises, but the Government have done nothing to redeem them, and I think it is their duty now, at the beginning of the Session to explain to the House how we stand in the matter. All that the Government did when they received the Report of the Royal Commission was to take the most difficult part of it—that which referred to drainage and navigation combined—and they insisted on dealing with that or nothing. They proposed that a large amount of money should be spent out of local resources upon the drainage of the Shannon and the Barrow, which the people of Ireland thoroughly objected to; and they did nothing for the general improvement of the Irish harbours and railways. They are now more solemn than ever in their promises; but as there has not been, during the last six or twelve months, any increase in armaments on the part of the European Powers, I do not think the Government are justified in neglecting the development of the resources of Ireland, and demanding a large sum of money on behalf the Naval and Military Services. All this expenditure might have been foreseen by the Government, seeing that the expenditure on the part of Foreign Powers has been a gradual one. Her Majesty's Government should have made their preparations earlier, and I believe the money would have been more profitably expended. They now propose to spend a large sum of money all at once, and at least one-half of it will be wasted. At present our relations with foreign countries are satisfactory, but the Foreign Minister may say "we may be in difficulties with a foreign country, and it is well to be prepared." If that were

said I should not think it would be out of the way to ask for £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 at the outside. However, if the Government should say it is insufficient my reply would be. "Then you have been neglecting your duty during this past two years." We must remember that our foreign neighbours have been spending these vast sums on armaments for the last 8 or 10 years and that they have made no change in their policy during the past 6 months—if they had changed their policy, no doubt a change of policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government would be justified. At present, no doubt we are beating the air, the Government having given us no information as to how much they intend to spend. But should their proposal be to spend as much as £12,000,000, the result would be that the contractors will revel in it, the War Department will indulge in every conceivable fad, the country will get only £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 of value, and the House of Commons will lose control over the Estimates. More than that, a precedent will have been set for future gigantic expenditure. I think the War Minister and the Lords of the Admiralty ought to imitate the economy of those of their predecessors who have endeavoured to make money go a long way, and not imitate the extravagance of Mr. Wm. Pitt, who burdened this country with a debt of hundreds of millions. I hope the Government will, as soon as possible, give us some indication of the amount of money they are going to ask for.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): This debate has been somewhat desultory, because by common consent the discussion of the most important questions mentioned in the Queen's Speech has been postponed until the Measures are before the House. Hon. Members have complained of omissions from the Speech, but that is a little at variance with the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who hinted in his remarks that perhaps Her Majesty's Government had fallen into the error of proposing too many Measures. There are, I think, plenty of topics for the consideration of Parliament which in due time will engage its attention. I have risen principally to notice remarks made by some hon. Members which deserve reply, and particularly those made by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), who has in a very temperate speech referred to subjects which have in former Sessions been discussed by him. The hon. Member takes a warm and very natural interest in the safety of trading and mission stations in Central Africa. Well, I cannot on this occasion say anything of a different nature to what I have said before, which is that, while those stations, whether commercial or missionary, are entitled to all the respect that belongs to enterprises most honourable in themselves and involving great personal sacrifices on the part of their promoters, it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to undertake the responsibility of imposing on this country any burdens in connection with them. These enterprises are undertaken by the free act of their promoters, and are in a region with which the Government of this country are not in immediate contact, and in which no assistance the Government can render them could proceed from any base. It is therefore impossible that Her Majesty's Government could give any indication that those persons could depend upon any material assistance from them. I have stated that there are certain things that Her Majesty's Government will require on behalf of those persons. When the Portuguese endeavoured to close the Zambesi, their right to do so was disputed, and it was stipulated that our countrymen should not be interrupted in obtaining those warlike stores which might be necessary to maintain their positions. I cannot recognize the justice of the complaint that the Portuguese have established a custom-house on a tributary of the Zambesi, because it was an admission that the Portuguese territory ended there, and Her Majesty's Government have rather reason to complain that that custom-house has been removed. The hon. Member suggested that the Government should interfere with the progress of the Portuguese force, which has gone into the interior of the country, lest it should disturb our Settlements. If such were likely to be the result of the expedition, it would undoubtedly be a matter of complaint on the part of Her Majesty's Government; but I hope no such occasion will arise. Her

Majesty's Government do not know what is the precise object or the point at which that expedition aims; but they cannot, of course, take exception to the passage of an exploring force into the interior of the Portuguese territory. The hon. Member has referred to the events which have taken place on the Zanzibar coast, and he expressed suspicion and apprehension at the identification of German and British interests on that coast. It ought to be remembered that Her Majesty's Government were not the originators of the action which has been taken in this matter. It was in 1884 that the Germans formed the project of establishing a base of influence on the East Coast of Africa, and sought from the Sultan of Zanzibar a concession of the same character as we ourselves had acquired, and in the following year Her Majesty's Government were directly approached by the Government of Germany with the view of obtaining their consent to such an arrangement, and it was certainly the act of a friendly power to carry us with them in their enterprise. We should have been very much in the wrong had we opposed the efforts of any other Christian and civilizing nation to establish itself in colonies in parts of the earth which we ourselves had not occupied. There are few places suitable for European enterprise that we have not entered, and it would be selfish and narrow-minded and injurious to our own national interests were we to show insane jealousy of similar enterprise on the part of other European nations. A British company has secured the concession of trading facilities and administrative functions over a large part of the same coast, and they have not had the misfortune to fall into conflict with the natives to any considerable extent. They have formed good relations with the natives; they have won the confidence of the Arabs, and also of the tribes of the country, but I beg the House to remember that they are people of great experience of Oriental nations. They have had their misfortunes, they have made mistakes, but they have acquired a certain knowledge of the best means of managing Eastern Princes and peoples, so that they are able now to avoid many of the accidents and misadventures that may happen when European agents attempt to embark in enterprises in a country already occupied. German interference is a matter very much to be deplored, but I venture to think that the House will not consider it their duty or the duty of Her Majesty's Government to express an opinion as to the acts of German agents on that coast, or even of German forces. It is entirely beyond their sphere. We have no more right to criticise and comment, or offer our advice upon those proceedings, than foreign Powers have to give us their advice in their dealings in any sphere or regions in which Her Majesty's Government possesses influence or territory. We should resent it. If Her Majesty's Government possesses influence in the world, it is from keeping within our own rights and duties and not intruding ourselves upon the functions of other nations. But, while I say that, I also say that it is deeply to be regretted in the interest of all parties, in the interest of the friendly German nation, in the interest of the African tribes, in the interest of civilization, that there should have been such a collision; but this matter of influence and operations on the coast is a totally different matter from our taking part jointly in the blockade of the coast with Germany. The German Government invited us to join them in blockading the coast, which was to a large extent in a state of insurrection, for the purpose of preventing the importation of arms and the exportation of slaves. The exportation of slaves was a practice which this country has laboured to put down now for three-quarters of a century, and I put it to the House that we should have done very wrong to have refused to join a great Power hand in hand to stop that exportation. The Member for West Edinburgh asked whether the Portuguese were parties to the blockade. They were in a sense, because they complied with the invitation to join in the enterprise and undertake the blockade of their own coast. They were not concerned in the operations in the German sphere, and as there is no war in their country it was not to be a blockade. The French are to be parties, but the French have no immediate interest such as Germany and England have on that coast. By the permission of the French Government, we are able to take positive action against the import

of arms and the export of slaves by carrying out an effective blockade on that coast, which could have been done in no other way. While the French are as much opposed to the slave trade as ourselves, they are jealous of the examination of their ships by men-of-war of other nations, and had Her Majesty's Government not joined the blockade on that coast, they would not have had the right to visit vessels flying the French flag, though possibly engaged in the slave trade; therefore there is in every way a great advantage in the objects in which all civilized nations have a part, particularly this country, by joining in the establishment of the blockade on the Zanzibar Coast. I have said that, fortunately, in the British sphere of influence there has been no opposition of any importance, neither has there been any interruption of trade. On the contrary, trade has been steadily improving, the relations with the British East African Company have been constantly increasing, and I am sure, while we should be sorry to gain at the expense of any rivals and competitors, we have lost nothing in our sphere of influence by reason of the state of war which unhappily exists in the German sphere, and I hope that this British enterprise is tending towards a happy result, and is destined to add to the colonizing triumphs of this country, and to give an addition to the markets for the manufactures of the country. Something has been said about the state of affairs in Samoa. Papers are about to be presented on the subject which will give the proceedings at the Conference at Washington, and as that Conference is shortly to reassemble, the House will not desire to go largely into the state of affairs in Samoa. But here, as with reference to Zanzibar, it is right that I should point out that, while the two Governments of Germany and England act independently of each other as regards the action of the separate Governments, we have an understanding with the German Government as to the best means of exercising European influence over the native Government of that country in the time coming. It is manifest from the internal troubles which have existed for so many years in Samoa that the Government cannot stand alone, and Her Majesty's Government expressed the opinion at the conference at Washington that it is better that one Power should exercise influence there rather than that three Governments should act through their representatives, who have failed to produce any satisfactory result. We have had no difference with the United States on the matter, but they take a different view at Washington; consequently the Conference did not result then in any settlement, but the Government of the United States have discussed the matter with the German Government in the most friendly and frank manner, and I hope that when the Conference re-assembles it will be with the prospect of coming to a satisfactory conclusion. There were some remarks made by the hon. Member for Queen's County which I will not pass over entirely without remark, because they were to some extent of a mischievous tendency, The hon. Member has said that the negotiations carried on by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham for the settlement of the Fisheries Question has proved abortive on account of the dislike entertained towards the right hon. Gentleman by a part of the people of the American Republic. Undoubtedly, from certain causes, the Fisheries Treaty has not been ratified; but by means of the *modus vivendi* arrived at between the two Governments not a single Canadian or American vessel has been seized while the arrangement was in operation, and no trouble occurred in the fisheries on the Canadian Coast. This fact alone justifies the policy of Her Majesty's Government in undertaking the negotiations, and is a tribute to the admirable way in which they were carried on by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The hon. Member has referred to the Sackville and Morier incidents. These are not matters that trouble the minds of great countries. The Sackville incident has blown over, and we can afford to discard the trifles which have rendered the incident of more importance than it would have otherwise acquired; and I am quite sure the relations with the great American Republic and our own nation will not be permanently injured by a trap laid for the British Minister,

or by any attempt to fan the affair into undeserved importance by those who might not wish well to the good relations between Great Britain and the United States. As to the affair in which the name of her Majesty's Ambassador in St. Petersburg has been involved, I can only say that I do not think that there is any one in this country who believes for a moment that that distinguished British servant would have been guilty of any act which was unworthy of his position or of which he would have cause to be ashamed. It is to be regretted that mischief-makers should have dragged his name forward in this undeserved manner; but it has not been necessary at any time to clear it. The incident has passed by without any interruption of the good relations between those great countries which have so many common interests, and which are so concerned in the advancement of civilization and the preservation of European peace.

*Mr. JAMES BRYCE (Aberdeen): Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the present moment is one very well suited to the discussion, large discussion, of the Foreign Policy of Her Majesty's Government; at the same time there are some matters raised by the remarks of my right hon. Friend, and by those made in an earlier part of the evening, which seem to require comment. I was a little disappointed that my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary did not answer more fully some of the points raised by the hon. Member for Edinburgh, and that no more distinct indication has been given of what information would be forthcoming on those subjects in the form of Parliamentary Papers. I would like to know when we are to expect Parliamentary Papers regarding Zanzibar, and I would be glad also if he would give us some fuller account of what line the Government propose to take as regards Samoa, and also when the Samoan papers will be produced. I quite agree that Great Britain has no reason to be jealous of the settlement or colonization of Germany on any part of the East African Coast. The possessions of Great Britain are large enough to enable her to regard even with satisfaction the progress of a Power always friendly to herself and connected by so many ties of blood and sympathy. I do not understand from what was said by my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh, and those who before the late Recess criticised the action of Her Majesty's Government with regard to East Africa, that they at all desired that Her Majesty's Government should have adopted a policy of suspicion or jealousy towards Germany, but merely doubted the wisdom of the action which Her Majesty's Government had taken in joining Germany in the blockade. I do not wish to express any opinion on that until further information is forthcoming. But the question is more serious than the Under Secretary seemed to admit. What has been feared all along was that the participation of the English Government in these hostilities, which seemed to be in danger of spreading into the interior, might prejudicially affect British traders on the coast and missionaries in the interior. We know that no inconsiderable loss has already been suffered by English and Indian coast residents, and there is grave risk that the relations with the internal tribes may be further disturbed. I should like to hear from the Government what action they will take in that matter. The House has not been told what advice Her Majesty's Government are tendering to Germany with regard to her policy in East Africa, and how far they have informed themselves with regard to the risks arising in the interior to the trade and interests of British subjects. These are points on which the Government may not be prepared to give answer at a moment's notice; but it is to be hoped that before long the House will have the assurance that the Government are alive to and are taking precautions against the dangers which any active operations on the part of the Germans may entail upon British subjects. Now I must say that our anxiety on these matters, and the care with which hon. Members are inclined to watch the conduct of the Government in co-operating with Germany are considerably increased by the previous conduct of the Government. We cannot help remembering that since Her Majesty's Government came into the control of these matters, there has been, in one way or another, a considerable withdrawal from the

position of influence which Great Britain has occupied on the Zanzibar coast, and to a great extent that position of influence and authority, held by her without offence to any other Power, and with great benefit to East Africa, has been yielded to the German Government. We cannot forget that it was they who recalled Sir John Kirk, and I must say that the disposition to be subservient to Germany in every demand has led hon. Members to regard with more suspicion than would otherwise have been the case the action of the Government in joining the blockade. If this was the feeling in regard to Zanzibar, it was much more intensified in the case of Samoa. I defy any hon. Member to study the history of the last two or three years in Samoa without perceiving that the English Government has played a rather ignoble and subservient part there. Hon. Members will remember the debate which took place in June or July last on Samoan affairs. It was shown, and has not been denied by the Government, that the Germans had treated Malietoa with unjustifiable severity, and that Her Majesty's Government had not remonstrated. The remonstrance against their high-handed behaviour, which continued even after the dethronement of that unfortunate King, at last proceeded not from the English Government, but from the United States, and I confess to a feeling of regret that it has been left to the American Government to vindicate the rights of the people of Samoa, and to remonstrate against the harsh and high-handed action of the German Government. We find now that the United States are determined to see that the interests of their subjects and what they considered to be their influence are placed on an equal footing with the influence exercised by Germany. Perhaps the Government will now take a similar view, but I hope it is not too late for Her Majesty's Government to take the United States into their confidence and to act as cordially with them as they have acted compliantly with Germany. The Government have told the House scarcely anything with regard to Suakin. The right hon. Gentleman must know that the country looked with considerable anxiety for an expression of the views of the Government as to the future of that place. What are the reasons which induce the Government to expect a more pacific state of things? What are their intentions in case the security of the garrison should be again threatened? Before sitting down I have a word to say on another matter. Some time ago a proposal was made from the Government of the United States to the chief maritime Powers that they should join in a congress to be held at Washington to settle a number of questions relating to the safety of life at sea. I understand that for some reason no definite reply has been received from Her Majesty's Government to that invitation, but the statement has appeared in public prints that the invitation was declined, and apparently on no very weighty grounds. I believe an impression exists in America that the Government were in a state of some irritation, arising out of what is called the Sackville incident, and it has been supposed that their refusal to take part in .hat conference had something to do with the annoyance caused to them by that incident. I feel, however, that this is not a likely circumstance, and I hope Her Majesty's Government take a higher view of their own international responsibilities and duties than to allow an incident of that comparatively trivial nature to make any difference to their diplomatic action in a matter such as this proposed Maritime Conference. I shall be glad to receive some assurance that Her Majesty's Government have given full consideration to the invitation to take part in this congress; whether they have refused the invitation; and, if so, on what ground. I trust that full information will be forthcoming on the whole matter, but must express the hope that no such petty diplomatic troubles as those which occurred immediately before the recent Presidential Election will be suffered to affect the relations of two great peoples who are animated by sentiments of mutual affection and respect.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: If the House will permit me, I should like to satisfy the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bryce) as to one matter he has just referred to. It is a mistake to suppose that Her Majesty's Government has declined the invitation

of the United States to join them in the Maritime Conference. There was a mistake made in communicating the message of the United States Government to Her Majesty's Government, and it was understood that the points to be discussed were to be particularized before the answer of the Government was given. But when that view was corrected and the United States desired that the point should be particularized after Her Majesty's Government and other Governments had given a general assent, Her Majesty's Government at once expressed its willingness to enter the Conference. Then the United States said it was too late to meet at Washington in the coming season, and it was proposed that the Conference should be postponed until the autumn. Before the autumn arrives no doubt preliminaries will be arranged, and I hope the Conference will meet. As to Suakin, I think the First Lord of the Treasury has dealt sufficiently with that point, which, I may point out, has not been noticed by any subsequent speaker. The operations there have been perfectly successful. The tribes are showing a peaceful disposition, the Dervishes have retired, and the policy of standing on the defensive has proved so successful in Egypt that, notwithstanding the losses caused by the unusually low Nile, there is a substantial surplus on the proceeds of the year and a substantial addition to the reserve fund formed by the Egyptian Government.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I beg to move "That this debate be now adjourned."

Motion agreed to.

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1887-8.

Copy ordered, "of Accounts showing—

1. The Receipts and Payments in connection with the Fund in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1888:

2. The Distribution of the Capital of the Fund at the commencement and close of the year, together with the Correspondence with the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

MR. C. A. V. CONYBEARE (Camborne): I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is going to give the House the opportunity of discussing the contract with the new printers of the Parliamentary Debates? We were told last session we should have an opportunity of considering and revising that contract; but I understand that the new firm have already begun operations. If this be so, I do not see how this House can revise the contract with the least possibility of modifying, varying, or objecting to it. If, as I am told, the new printers have commenced operations, we have a right to complain of the course the Government have taken in going away from their promise, and not allowing us the opportunity we were to have had.

*MR. JACKSON: I cannot admit that the Government has gone back from its word in reference to the alleged promise to give the House an opportunity of discussing the new contract for the reporting and publishing of the debates of Parliament. What I said in answer to the hon. Gentleman was that a copy of the contract would be laid on the Table. That has been done. The Government has made the contract on their responsibility. They believe it to be a very good contract in the interests of economy, and they have no reason to doubt that the work will be as well done as hitherto; indeed, that the debates will be more fully reported in the new *Hansard* than had previously been the case, and I believe the contract is one with which the House will be satisfied.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not object to the terms of the contract; but I think I am right in saying it was not laid on the Table or placed before the country until after the House had adjourned for the Christmas recess.

*MR. JACKSON: It could not have been laid on the Table of the House after the House had adjourned.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 2.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 2.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 22nd February, 1889.

THE MAR PEERAGE.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had received by post from the Lord Clerk Register of Scotland:—

Minutes of the election of the Earl of Lauderdale as one of the sixteen Peers of Scotland, 10th January last, in room of Walter Henry Earl of Mar and Kellie, deceased; and

Separate Return by the Deputy Clerk Register of certain Titles of Peerage called at the said election, in right of which respectively no vote had been received and counted at any election for fifty years then last past (pursuant to Act 14th and 15th Vict., chap. 87.):

Original Protest tendered by John Francis Erskine Earl of Mar at the said election:

Ordered that the said Minutes of Election, &c. be printed.

INDIAN PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for India what steps had been taken to carry into effect the recommendations of the Indian Public Service Commission, said: It is now some months since the Report of this Commission on the Public Service in India was presented to Parliament, and I should hope that the Government would now be in a position to give us some information as to the conclusions at which they have arrived upon the very important matters dealt with by the Commission.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): I am very glad of the opportunity of answering the question. It is quite true that the Report of the Commission came to this country some time ago, but the observations of the Government of India upon that Report did not reach this country until the 29th of October, and as nothing could be done in the meantime, until those observations had reached me, I do not myself see how we could have taken further steps in the way of carrying out the recommendations. A Special Committee of the India Council has been appointed, who have the advantage of the services of Sir Charles Turner, who was a Member of the Commission, and is now a member of the Special Committee. That Committee have been considering the question very carefully since that time. I have made inquiries, and I find that I may expect a Report in a very short time, and no time will be lost in considering the nature of that Report, in order that some steps may be taken to see how the recommendations of the Committee can be carried out. No doubt the matter is one of extreme importance, but the Report of the Commission covers a very wide field.

THE LINCOLN PROSECUTION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

*THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in rising to inquire whether, looking to the extremely grave consequences likely to ensue, Her Majesty's Government were prepared to take any action in reference to the case of "Read and others *v.* the Bishop of Lincoln," now pending before his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, said:—My Lords,

the question of which I have given notice is, I am quite aware, a very unusual one to put on the paper, and the course which it may be thought that I indicate as that to be taken by Government I frankly admit is one which could not be recommended or adopted except under the most serious circumstances. But, my Lords, the circumstances of this case are unusual, perhaps I might say unprecedented, and they seem to me to raise issues of so momentous a character that it is well worth while for Her Majesty's Government to consider seriously whether they have any means at their disposal for arresting a course of things and events which may be most disastrous—whether there is not in the armoury of Constitutional law some implement which may avert a great calamity. My Lords, only a few days ago we saw in the Library of Lambeth Palace—a place consecrated by many great historical associations—a meeting of a remarkable Court. It was one in which his Grace the most rev. Primate presided, surrounded by a certain number of Assessors and aided by the Vicar General of his Province; and before that Court was cited a right rev. Prelate, who presides over the Diocese of Lincoln, to answer certain charges which were placed on record against him. I believe that lawyers are agreed that the form of those proceedings is technically criminal, and in substance it must certainly be held to be criminal; because, although this particular action might and would end with a mere spiritual monition, yet if that monition were disregarded it must, in the course of things, proceed to a suspension, and that suspension must terminate in deprivation. My Lords, for certainly 200 years there has been no precedent for such a Court. There is, I believe, but one clear precedent between this time and the Reformation. Some doubt was naturally felt in the minds of many whether that Court could exercise a valid jurisdiction. That question I will not enter into; but I understand that for all judicial purposes we may take it as settled by a more or less formal decision of the Privy Council, and I doubt not that the most rev. Primate was perfectly justified when he decided to act on that decision, and to constitute that Court. My Lords, I would be the last person to seem by any word of mine to throw a shadow of doubt on the validity of that Court. I am satisfied that, whatever a Court may do, that Court, constituted as it is, will endeavour to do in the interests of justice towards all parties. My fears are directed to a different point. They are directed to the consequences which may, and which I conscientiously believe will, ensue if this matter is allowed to run its course. My Lords, let me speak quite plainly for a few minutes. I believe that whatever be the issue of this present litigation it must be disastrous. If, on the one hand, the judgment be in favour of the accused Bishop, there will be, I take it, a conflict or an apparent conflict with previous decisions, and there will undoubtedly be a long course of serious litigation. The last time this Court of Audience ever sat, in the case of Bishop Watson, to which I have referred, I believe that the case was appealed from the Court to the Court of King's Bench, and from the Court of King's Bench to the House of Lords. And so, we may depend upon it, it will be in this case. But if, on the other hand, the decision should be adverse to the right rev. Prelate, then I fear that the consequences will be very much more serious indeed. Do not let us blind ourselves to the plain, broad matter of fact. This issue is clearly not stated for the purpose of trying and legally determining certain ceremonies or particular points which are at issue. It is, and it must be regarded, as a struggle between those parties into which the Church of England is unhappily divided at this moment. I speak absolutely without prejudice on the one side or on the other. I speak in defence and for the sake of that wide and wise comprehension which has characterized the whole history of the Church for generations, and I believe that this particular action is far more serious than any action that has been tried in spiritual matters within the memory of the existing generation. It is the culmination, so to say—it is the end of a succession of cases which have been tried before the Privy Council. I should not be far wrong if I said that this is probably the greatest crisis in matters ecclesiastical within the memory of any now living. Up to this time, as your Lordships are aware, there has been a clause in the Church Discipline

Act which has accorded to every Bishop of every diocese the power of interposing his veto when any question of this sort is raised. It is the absence of that discretionary power which has brought about this issue. And if this action succeeds, as we are bound to suppose it may succeed, it can but be the commencement of further litigation in the same sense. Prosecutions will be veiled thinly under the name of prosecution, and they will very soon take the form of religious persecution. I am convinced that if this matter go on there is imminent risk of the Church of England being rent in twain by the conflict of these parties. There will be within the Church a large body of Clergy, of learning, of piety, of zeal, who are the very salt of the Church, it may be said, who possess in every great town thousands of enthusiastic and devoted adherents, who will not hesitate at any cost to make common cause with the defeated party; and there will be a still larger body who will resent what they consider to be the unmerited persecution of a blameless individual. There will be vast congregations who will not hesitate to throw in their lot with the right rev. Prelate, and, my Lords, the floodgates of passion and strife will be thrown open, and there is no man living who can predict what will be the end of it. Her Majesty's Government, I have no doubt, appreciate the enormous gravity of the situation. They are face to face with a very great difficulty. I do not disguise how hard it is for them to take any action in such a matter. They may say that a case which is *sub judice* and pending in a Court of Law cannot and ought not to be interrupted. On the one hand they have all the forms, all the regular practice, the technicalities in the reasonable sense of the word, which counsel them to absolute inaction. On the other hand they have a crisis in which the vital and essential interests of the Church, and possibly of the State, are bound up. It is for them to decide whether they will persevere in these formal paths, for which they can plead the excuse of precedent and practice, whether they will stand by with folded arms, or whether they will embrace some effort to prevent the consummation of a great catastrophe. Let me explain, my Lords, that the object I have in my mind is twofold. Something may perhaps be done to arrest the course of this present dangerous suit. I think if my noble Friend at the head of the Government chooses to inquire into the matter, he will find that, though few, there are precedents that may warrant him in taking such a course. But there is a second object, which is even more important, and it is this—the taking of such measures as may prevent in the future the recurrence of such dangerous suits. There are precedents for both contingencies, and there is a great warning—a warning which lifts this matter above the mere technical law into the highest realms of policy. There is a warning which, like a beacon, flames out on your path, and bids you at all events think well before you allow the present time to go by—I am speaking of that disastrous schism in the Church of Scotland. Remember how that arose and what it was. It arose on a question of patronage. The Government of the day hoped for the best, and allowed events to take their course; the schism came; and years afterwards an Act of Parliament was passed, but it was then much too late to cure the evil. So it may be in the present case. I will not attempt to point out to Her Majesty's Government the course which they should pursue; it is one which may well exercise the clearest heads and the soundest judgments. This only I will say—I believe there is more than one course which is open, and there are probably hundreds and thousands in the country who will look with anxiety for the answer which Her Majesty's Government will give to my question.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I have listened with great pleasure to my noble Friend's most interesting speech, and, in common with your Lordships, I have recognized the feelings of deep sincerity which underlie the remarks of my noble Friend. I am very anxious that in what I say there should not appear to be the slightest shadow of discourtesy to my noble Friend; and if I do not attempt to follow him through every argument he has advanced, I hope he will not think it is either because I underrate the gravity of the subject, or

proposes to furnish, the name of the contractor who supplied these swords?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Certainly; the names of the firms contracting for all swords that have been tested will be given in the Report.

*MR. MUNDELLA: Will the Report state the difference in cost between really good, serviceable, and battle-worthy swords and those which proved to be defective?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I do not altogether understand the Question.

*MR. MUNDELLA: I want to know what is the difference between the cost of these damaged swords and a superior weapon?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: A superior weapon, such as an officer in the Army might use, will probably cost about seven guineas, while the ordinary swords put into the hands of the cavalry soldiers have averaged, I believe, 16*s.* or 18*s.*; and, what is more, they passed every test which the Military Authorities have laid down.

At a subsequent period,

*MR. E. STANHOPE said: In reference to the question of the cost of the swords, I have an additional remark to make. The Question was put to me without notice, and I should prefer to state on Monday what the exact cost is. I may say that there has never been any intention to cut down the price. The Military Authorities settle for themselves what particular class of swords they want, and the contract is then put out to tender.

MR. MAC NEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman give the House an assurance on Monday that the swords of the officers and of the soldiers are of the same quality?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: No; that is not so. The officers provide their own swords.

MR. HANBURY: Are the officers' swords ever tested at all?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: That is entirely a matter for the officers themselves. The officers buy their own swords—and no doubt take care to provide themselves with the best weapons.

THE POOR LAW AND LADY INSPECTORS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been given to the following passage from the Report of the Select Committee on Poor Law Relief:—

> "We recommend that the system of Lady Inspectors should be further extended so as to secure the more complete inspection of boarded-out children, and also the inspection of the female and children's wards in workhouses, and of the staff of nurses and other female officers;"

and, whether any steps have been, or are about to be, taken to carry out this recommendation of the Select Committee?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's-in-the-East): With regard to children boarded out beyond the Union to which they are chargeable the Board have had the services of a Lady Inspector, and there has been an inspection of the children boarded out under the several Boarding-out Committees. These Committees consist either exclusively or for the most part of ladies, and it is upon these Committees that the responsibility for the supervision of the children must devolve. The inspection undertaken by the Board has not been so much with the view of ascertaining the condition of each individual child as of learning, by means of an inspection of the children and the foster-parents' homes, how the duties which devolve on the Boarding-out Committees are discharged. The arrangements for inspection by Lady Inspectors of the female and children's wards, and of the staff of nurses and other female officers in workhouses in England and Wales, which number between 700 and 800, would involve the employment of a considerable addition to the Board's staff of Inspectors, and the Government do not contemplate making such appointments. It is to be borne in mind that the workhouses are also visited by General Inspectors, School Inspectors, and Commissioners of Lunacy, and I should be very reluctant to propose a system of inspection by an additional class of Inspectors. I do not in the least under-estimate the advantages which might result from ladies assisting in the administration of workhouses, but in my opinion this assistance can best be secured by the election of Lady Guardians.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to give notice that in Committee of Supply I will call attention to this subject.

RAILWAY RATES.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether it is within his knowledge that the Railway Companies have, since the passing of the Railway Traffic Act of 1888, raised the rates on the carriage of merchandize in many instances; and, if so, whether he is able to give any information on the subject by way of a Return or otherwise?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH) (Bristol, W.): I have no official information as to any changes made by the Railway Companies in the rates charged for the conveyance of traffic previous to the 1st January of this year, and can, therefore, lay no Return before the House. No increase in the rates can be made since that date without full publication of the intended increase and the date on which it is to take effect. The Board of Trade have prescribed Rules for such publication, and have called upon the Railway Companies for information as regards any increase made since the date mentioned. When that information is received, I shall be glad to show it to the hon. Member.

THE CASE OF MR. ARTHUR CRAWFORD.

MR. BAUMANN (Peckham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the conduct of Mr. Arthur Crawford have presented their Report to the Government of Bombay, and, if so, when the Report will be published; and, whether the Secretary of State will take into consideration a statement that the Governor of Bombay promises to continue in their offices magistrates who swore that they took bribes?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The recent proceedings at Bombay in reference to Mr. Crawford have been an inquiry under Indian Act 37 of 1850, and not a criminal trial. The Report of the Commissioners furnishes the Government of Bombay with materials to enable them to pass judgment upon his conduct. The Report has been received, and is now under the consideration of the Government of Bombay. But until a final decision is arrived at, the publication of the Report would be contrary to the intentions of the Act. If any such statement as that specified in the Question were made to the Secretary of State, he would, of course, take it into his consideration. The incriminated magistrates have, in fact, been suspended from their judicial functions pending the consideration of the Report.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked whether the suspension had taken place after many articles had appeared in Indian papers on the subject?

SIR JOHN GORST: In the Recess I went for a holiday, and I can assure the hon. Member that I did not spend my time in reading the Indian papers. I cannot answer the Question without notice.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): Will the result of the investigation be communicated to the prisoner, or whatever he is called?

SIR JOHN GORST: That could not be done until the Government of Bombay has determined what action is to be taken in regard to the Report of the Commission. Until that determination has been arrived at it will be impossible to communicate the nature of the Report to anybody.

LABOUR IN MINES.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the following statement in the last Report of Mr. Hall, Inspector of Mines for the Liverpool District, viz., "The hours of labour of women and boys are longer under the new Act of Parliament than what was the custom under the 1872 Act;" and, whether it is true, so far as this district is concerned, that the intervals for meals provided for in the Act of 1887 no longer count for labour, as under the Act of 1872; and, if so, whether such practice is in conformity with the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir. My attention has been called to

this statement. The provisions in the Acts of 1872 and 1887, both as to limiting the period of employment and as to meal times, appear to me identical, but the wording of the provisions in the Act of 1872 was certainly equivocal, and the practice consequently varied. In some districts meal times were not counted for labour; in others, including Mr. Hall's, they were counted, not, however, in all the mines of the district; and since the Act of 1887 they are no longer counted for labour; and this appears to me to be in conformity with the Statute. It was not, I think, the intention of Parliament to limit the hours of women, boys, and girls employed above ground to eight and a-half hours per diem, or to make them shorter than the hours prescribed for boys below ground.

MR. FENWICK: May I ask whether boys under 16 years of age can be kept in a mine for more than 10 hours at a time?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Question which the hon. Member asked me related to the employment of boys above ground.

METROPOLITAN FAIRS.

MR. KELLY (Camberwell, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the provisions of "The Metropolitan Fairs Act, 1868," are not now carried out, and that fairs, with shows, &c., are now held within the Metropolitan area, to the great annoyance, loss, and inconvenience of the ratepayers; and, whether the Act is treated as a nullity in pursuance of any order issued by himself to the Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis?

MR. MATTHEWS: Since I have been at the Home Office I have had only one complaint with respect to annoyance caused by an exhibition of shooting galleries, swings, and roundabouts at Stratford. The police did not interfere, because they were advised that in that case the only remedy was by indictment, and there is no provision for the costs of prosecution in such a case. The Secretary of State, in 1884, directed the police not to interfere with similar shows, on the ground that they were innocent amusements of the humbler classes; but I do not understand this direction as nullifying the Metropolitan Fairs Act, 1868, or preventing its application in suitable cases.

SCHOOL BOARD CASES.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report of the following remarks alleged to have been made in Court by Mr. Horace Smith, Magistrate at the Clerkenwell Police Court, on 31st January, "that he got so tired of hearing School Board cases, that he should decline to hear any more summonses after 4.30 p.m.; also that he wished the School Board would take steps to secure the appointment of a magistrate on purpose to deal with School Board cases, as he did not intend to sit any longer than he was paid for;" whether he is aware that owing to the frequent adjournments and the refusal of the magistrates to grant summonses, it is impossible for the London School Board to produce satisfactory results; and whether he proposes to take any and what action to mitigate the hardship of the present arrangements to the poor, and to facilitate the work of the School Board?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the magistrate that the newspaper report is quite inaccurate. He informs me that from 2 to 4.30 on the day in question he heard nine industrial school summonses and 53 School Board summonses. At 4.30, having day charges to try, he adjourned the remaining 16 School Board summonses. Thursday afternoon is given up every week at this Court to School Board cases. I am told by the chief magistrate that the arrangements adopted for hearing School Board cases have been generally successful in producing an improved attendance, and I have no information leading me to think that the London magistrates could materially lessen the trouble that School Board cases must necessarily cause both to the poor and to the officers of the Board.

SALMON FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL

MR. ALEXANDER LAING BROWN asked the Lord Advocate if, in view of the strong opposition which it has evoked, it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Salmon Fisheries (Scotland) Bill?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Buteshire) was understood to say that, owing to the strong opposition which the Bill of last Session received, the Question would be carefully considered before another Bill was introduced.

NEW WRIT ISSUED.

For Burnley, *v.* J. Slagg, Esq., Chiltern Hundreds.

WARLIKE EXPENDITURE.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I wish to say that it is not my intention to proceed, this evening, with the Amendment to the Address which stands in my name, but I shall take the opportunity of introducing it when Her Majesty's Government make their proposal for an increased warlike expenditure.

LOCAL OPTION.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) gave notice that he would move to add at the end of paragraph 7 of the Address—

"And we humbly pray that in these Bills provision may be made for conferring within prescribed areas the power of direct popular veto on the issue of Excise licences."

ROYAL GRANTS.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he was now prepared to state the intentions of the Government with reference to the promised Committee on Royal Grants?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): It is the intention of the Government to ask the House to appoint a Committee to consider the practice of this House in the past in respect of secondary grants to Members of the Royal Family, to use the language of the right hon. Member for Mid-Lothian when submitting the grant for Her Royal Highness Princess Beatrice. I will take care that ample notice shall be given of the terms of the Reference to the proposed Committee.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury when the Estimate to meet the expenses of the Special Commission under the Members' Charges and Allegations Act, 1888, would be proposed to the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The cost of the Special Commission, 1888, so far as chargeable on Public Funds, is being defrayed from the sum inserted in the Temporary Commissions Vote for "Commissions not specifically provided for." In the Estimates for 1889-90 specific provision is made for the Commission.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

John Wilson, Esq., for Lanark (Govan Division).

MOTIONS.

RELIGIOUS PROSECUTIONS ABOLITION BILL.

On the Motion of Mr. Bradlaugh, Bill to abolish Prosecutions for the expression of opinion on matters of Religion, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Walter M'Laren, and Mr. Picton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 1.]

PRISONERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John O'Connor, Bill to amend the Laws relating to the treatment of prisoners in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Parnell, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 2.]

REMOVAL OF WRECKS ACT (1877) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Edward Birkbeck, Bill to amend "The Removal of Wrecks Act, 1877," ordered to be brought in by Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Marjoribanks, Mr. Penrose FitzGerald, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Byrne, Lord Charles Beresford, Mr. William Corbet, and Mr. James Lowther.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 3.]

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Rendel, Bill to promote Intermediate Education in Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Rendel, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Sir Hussey Vivian, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. William Abrahams, and Mr. Thomas Ellis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 4.]

COAL DUTIES (LONDON) ABOLITION BILL.

On Motion of Sir Joseph Pease, Bill to abolish any Duties on Coals leviable by the Corporation of London, ordered to be brought in by Sir Joseph Pease, Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Charles Palmer, Sir Henry Havelock-Allan, Mr. William Crawford, Mr. Wood, and Mr. Burt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 5.]

TRUST FUNDS INVESTMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Bill to amend the Law relating to the investment of Trust Funds, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Samuel Hoare, and Mr. Gully.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 6.]

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Crilly, Bill to amend the Law relating to Agricultural Tenants in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Crilly, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Lalor, Mr. Peter M'Donald, and Mr. Kilbride.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 7.]

THEATRES (COUNTY OF LONDON) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Bill for the better Regulation of Theatres and Music Halls in the county of London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Dixon-Hartland, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Tomlinson, and Mr. Woodall.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 8.]

COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS (IRELAND) BILL

On Motion of Mr. P. J. Power, Bill to amend the Law relating to the government of counties and boroughs in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. Carew, and Mr. Sexton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 9.]

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Woodall, Bill to extend the Parliamentary Franchise to Women, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Woodall, Dr. Cameron, Baron Dimsdale, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Illingworth, Mr. Maclure, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Stansfeld.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 10.]

LEASEHOLDS' ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to enable Leaseholders of Houses to purchase the Fee Simple of their holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Warmington, Sir John Puleston, and Mr. Thomas Ellis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 11.]

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Milvain, Bill to amend and consolidate the Law in relation to Corporal Punishment, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Milvain, Sir Matthew White Ridley, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. Samuel Smith.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 12.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur Elliot, Bill to alter and amend the Law in Scotland as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arthur Elliot, Lord Elcho, Mr. Thomas Sutherland, Mr. Cameron Corbett, and Mr. Shiress Will.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 13.]

DIVORCE (ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hunter, Bill to assimilate the Law of Divorce in England and Scotland, and to amend the same, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Hunter, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Fenwick, and Mr. Herbert Gardner.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 14.]

HAND-LOOM WEAVERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill for the better regulation of certain articles of linen manufacture woven upon Hand-Looms, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Colonel Saunderson, Colonel Waring, and Mr. O'Neill.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 15.]

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Malcolm, Bill to amend the Herring Fishery (Scotland) Acts; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Malcolm, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. Anstruther.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 16.]

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mac Neill, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Municipal Franchise in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mac Neill, Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Tuite, and Mr. Peter M'Donald.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 17.]

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lea, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Ireland on Saturday and Sunday, and for other purposes connected therewith, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lea, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Tuite, Sir James Corry, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. John Redmond, Sir William Ewart, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Maurice Healy, and Mr. Mahony.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 18.]

SLAVERY LAW CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Alfred Pease, Bill to amend and consolidate the Law relating to Slavery, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alfred Pease, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Whitbread, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Winterbotham, and Mr. Henry Anstruther.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 19.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Stevenson, Bill to prohibit the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Stevenson, Mr. Charles Wilson, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, and Mr. Octavius V. Morgan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 20.]

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tomlinson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Rating of hereditaments containing Machinery, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tomlinson, Sir William

Houldsworth, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Frederick Mappin, Mr. Mowbray, and Mr. Winterbotham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 21.]

TRIBUNALS OF COMMERCE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jacoby, Bill to establish Tribunals of Commerce, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jacoby, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Montagu, Mr. James Maclean, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. Wayman.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 22.]

POOR RATE (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Pickersgill, Bill to equalise the Poor Rate over the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Howell, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Stuart, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Montagu, and Mr. Lawson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 23.]

SOLDIERS AND SAILORS DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jeffreys, Bill to remove the Disabilities of Soldiers and Sailors to be registered as Voters at Parliamentary Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Howard Vincent.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 24.]

MINING ON CROWN LANDS (WALES AND IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Pritchard-Morgan, Bill to amend the Laws relating to Mining on Crown Lands in Wales and Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pritchard-Morgan, Mr. Randell, Mr. Henniker Heaton, and Mr. Fenwick.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 25.]

METROPOLIS RATING AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Montagu, Bill to provide for the better incidence of Rates in the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Montagu, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 26.]

TECHNICAL EDUCATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir Henry Roscoe, Bill to provide Technical Education in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Roscoe, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. George Dixon, and Mr. Arthur Acland.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 27.]

DURATION OF PARLIAMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to provide that no Parliament shall sit for more than three years, and to repeal the Septennial Act, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Handel Cossham, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Broadhurst, and Mr. Francis Stevenson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 28.]

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jesse Collings, Bill to give facilities for the creation of Small Holdings of Land, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Burt, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Broadhurst, Captain Cotton, Mr. Pitt-Lewis, Mr. Cyril Flower, and Mr. Newnes.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 29.]

LAND TENURE (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Thomas Ellis, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land in Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. John Roberts, and Mr. Warmington.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 30.]

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, Bill to amend "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," in regard to leaseholders, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea, and Mr. William Sinclair.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 31.]

POLICE DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Eyre, Bill to remove the disabilities of the Police to vote at municipal and county council elections, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Eyre, Mr. Heath, Mr. Bond, Captain Heathcote, Baron Dimsdale, and Mr. Llewellyn.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 32.]

MINING COURTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to establish Courts having jurisdiction in matters relating to the letting and working of Mines and Quarries in the United Kingdom; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Conybeare, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Jacoby, and Mr. Fenwick.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 33.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (MEETINGS IN SCHOOLS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Gardner, Bill to make provision for the use (subject to certain restrictions) of rooms in Public Elementary Schools for Meetings of Parliamentary Electors, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Gardner, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Maitland, Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Francis Stevenson, and Mr. Donald Crawford.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 34.

ADVERTISEMENT RATING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Bill to amend the Law with respect to Rating Places used for Advertisements, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Seager Hunt, and Mr. Howell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 35.]

CHURCH SITES (COMPULSORY POWERS REPEAL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis S. Powell, Bill to repeal the provisions of the Church Building Acts relating to the compulsory purchase of Sites for Churches and Burial Grounds, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Francis S. Powell, Mr. J. G. Talbot, and Mr. Addison.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 36.]

REGISTRATION OF CLUBS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Webster, Bill to provide for the Registration of Clubs occupying premises liable to be rated, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Webster, Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. Cochrane-Baillie, and Mr. Norris.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 37.]

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Peter M'Donald, Bill to amend the Law relating to Piers and Harbours in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Peter M'Donald, Mr. Crilly, Mr. O'Keeffe, Colonel Nolan, and Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 38.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

On Motion of Lord Henry Bruce, Bill to further amend the Law relating to the Dwellings of the Working Classes, and the Artizans and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Acts, 1875 to 1885, ordered to be brought in by Lord Henry Bruce, Major-General Goldsworthy, Sir William Plowden, Mr. Howell, and Mr. Bazley-White.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 39.]

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS AND COUNTY ELECTORS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Heath, Bill to amend "The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882," and "The County Electors' Act, 1888," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Heath, Colonel Eyre, Mr. Bond, Captain Heathcote, Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Llewellyn, and Mr. Theodore Fry.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 40.]

BANKRUPTCY BILL.

On Motion of Sir Albert Rollit, Bill to amend the Law of Bankruptcy, ordered to be brought in by Sir Albert Rollit, Colonel Hill, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Forrest Fulton, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Charles Wilson, and Mr. Gully.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 41.]

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Shiress Will, Bill to amend the Law relating to the election of School Boards in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Shiress Will, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. Lyell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 42.]

LONDON COAL AND WINE DUTIES CONTINUANCE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Baring, Bill to further Continue and Appropriate the London Coal and Wine Duties, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Baring and Sir Robert Fowler.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 43.]

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Kilbride, Bill to amend the Law relating to National School Teachers in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Clancy, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Timothy Harrington, and Mr. Tuite.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 44.]

ELECTORS' QUALIFICATION AND REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stansfeld, Bill to amend the Law with respect to the Qualification and Registration of Electors at Parliamentary, Municipal, and County Council Elections in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Childers, and Sir Charles Russell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 45.]

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Causton, Bill for making better provision for the Registration of Voters in the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Causton, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 46.]

ALLOTMENTS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cobb, Bill to amend the Allotments Act, 1887, and to create Allotments Councils, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cobb, Mr. Channing, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Arthur Acland, and Mr. Winterbotham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 47.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1875) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Norton, Bill to amend "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Norton, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Hoyle, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Samuel Hoare, and Mr. Cornwallis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 48.]

HORSEFLESH (SALE FOR FOOD) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Knowles, Bill to regulate the sale of Horseflesh for human food, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Knowles, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Lees, Mr. Maclure, Mr. Mowbray, and Mr. Shepherd Cross.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 49.]

STEAM BOILERS INSURANCE BILL.

On Motion of Sir William Houldsworth, Bill for the regulation of Steam Boiler Insurance by Joint Stock Companies, ordered to be brought in by Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. J. M. Maclean, and Mr. Burt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 50.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Bill to enable owners and occupiers in Wales to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Alfred Thomas, Mr. Carew, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. Bryn Roberts.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 51.]

OCCUPIERS' DISQUALIFICATION REMOVAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Whitmore, Bill to relieve Occupiers of Dwelling-houses and Lodgers from Disqualification as Voters at Parliamentary Elections by reason of temporary absence on service, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Hozier, and Mr. Mowbray.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 52.]

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Bill to restrict labour in Mines to eight hours per day, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cunninghame Graham, Mr. Pickard, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Conybeare, and Mr. Philipps.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 53.]

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON (PENSIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Richard Temple, Bill to extend the provisions of the Act twenty-ninth Victoria, chapter thirty-one, to the School Board for London, ordered to be brought in by Sir Richard Temple, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Francis Powell, Mr. Lafone, and Mr. Conybeare.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 54.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS' EXPENSES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Esslemont, Bill to provide for the payment of Expenses to be incurred by Returning Officers at Parliamentary Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Esslemont, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Wallace, Dr. Farquharson, and Mr. Hunter.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 55.]

COUNTY AND BURGH VOTERS' REGISTRATION AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill to amend the Law relative to the registration of persons entitled to vote in the election of Members to serve in Parliament for Counties and Burghs in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson, Sir George Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. J. B. Balfour, and Mr. Donald Crawford.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 56.]

METROPOLIS WATER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Penton, Bill to amend the Metropolitan Water Supply Companies Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Penton, Mr. Lawson, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, Mr. Bigwood, and Mr. Lambert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 57.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1883) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Munro Ferguson, Bill to amend "The Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1883," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Munro Ferguson and Mr. Haldane.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 58.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS REGISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cremer, Bill to amend the Law concerning the Registration of Parliamentary Voters in the United Kingdom, and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cremer, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Burt, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Pickard, and Mr. James Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 59.]

SUPERANNUATIONS (OFFICERS OF COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Norris, Bill to enable County Councils to provide a Fund, by deductions from salaries and wages of officers and servants in their employment, and to grant superannuation allowances therefrom, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Norris, Sir Richard Temple, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Bigwood, Mr. Isaacs, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read firsttime. [Bill 60.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL OPTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Allison, Bill to enable ratepayers and others in towns and districts to prevent the common sale of intoxicating liquors within the said areas, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Allison, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. Burt, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Caine, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Handel Cossham, Mr. Henry Wilson, and Mr. Octavius V. Morgan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 61.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Johnston, Bill to enable owners and occupiers in towns and districts in Ireland to prevent the common sale of intoxicating liquors, or otherwise to have effectual control over the drink traffic, within such area, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Johnston, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. de Cobain, and Mr. Jordan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 62.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Stuart, Bill to provide for the better housing of the working classes in the Metropolis, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, and Mr. James Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 63.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Heneage, Bill to alter and amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased

Wife's Sister, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Burt, Mr. Charles Cameron, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Robert Reid, and Mr. T. W. Russell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 64.]

TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Picton, Bill to amend the provisions relating to Hackney Carriages of "The Town Police Clauses Act, 1847," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Picton, Marquess of Granby, Mr. James Ellis, Mr. Tapling, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, and Mr. Tomlinson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 65.]

WEEKLY WAGES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Fenwick, Bill to provide for the payment of Wages weekly, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fenwick, Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan), Mr. Burt, Mr. Howell, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Randell, Mr. David Thomas, and Mr. de Cobain.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 66.]

INTESTATES' WIDOWS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ambrose, Bill to amend the Law by making better provision for the widows of certain intestates, in the distribution of such intestates' property, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ambrose, Mr. James Howard, Mr. Addison, and Mr. Kelly.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 67.]

LAND TENURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Clark, Bill for the amendment of the Law relating to the tenure of land in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Clark, Mr. Anderson, Dr. M'Donald, and Mr. Philipps.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 68.]

GLEBE LANDS OCCUPATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mowbray, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Occupation of Glebe Lands by Incumbents in England, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mowbray, Mr. Childers, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Channing, and Mr. Tomlinson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 69.]

SANITARY REGISTRATION OF BUILDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Farquharson, Bill for the Sanitary Registration of Buildings, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Farquharson, Dr. Cameron, Sir Henry Roscoe, and Sir Guyer Hunter.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 70.]

COLONIAL MARRIAGES LEGALISATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seager Hunt, Bill to make legal, in this Country, Marriages with a Deceased Wife's Sister legally contracted in the Colonies, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seager Hunt, Sir John Puleston, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Sir Edward Grey, and Mr. Charles Gray.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 71.]

ROD FISHING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Alexander Laing Brown, Bill to amend the Law relating to Rod Fishing in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alexander Laing Brown and Mr. Anderson.

HOURS OF POLLING (EXTENSION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sydney Buxton, Bill for the Extension of the Hours of Polling at Parliamentary and Municipal Elections, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Howell, Mr. Robert Reid, and Mr. Munro Ferguson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 72.]

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Anderson, Bill to amend and extend the provisions of "The Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Anderson, Mr. Esslemont, Dr. Clark, Dr. Hunter, and Mr. Brown.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 73.]

NONCONFORMIST MARRIAGES (REGISTRARS' ATTENDANCE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Kelly, Bill to amend the Law by dispensing with the attendance of Registrars at the Marriages of Nonconformists, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Kelly, Mr. Knowles, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, Sir Walter Foster, Colonel Anstruther, and Mr. Kerans.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 74.]

RIGHTS OF WAY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Buchanan, Bill to amend the Law relating to Rights of Way in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Baird, and Mr. Asquith.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 75.]

MINING ACCIDENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Baird, Bill to provide for a system of National insurance against Mining Accidents in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Baird, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Vernon, Mr. Hugh Elliot, and Mr. Preston Bruce.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 76.

POLITICAL OFFICES PENSION ACT (1869) REPEAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bradlaugh, Bill to repeal "The Political Offices Pension Act, 1869," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Dillwyn, Captain Edwards-Heathcote, and Mr. Summers.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 77.]

POLICE (METROPOLIS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Rowlands, Bill for placing the Police of the Metropolis under the control of the Ratepayers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Howell, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Causton, and Mr. Lawson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 78.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to amend the Laws relating to Agricultural Holdings in England, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Francis Stevenson, and Mr. Arthur Williams.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 79.]

FACTORS ACTS CONSOLIDATION BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to consolidate and amend the Factors Acts, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Baring, Mr. William Beckett, Mr. Rathbone, Mr. Robert Reid, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, and Mr. Whitley.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 80.]

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Woodall, Bill to amend the Act thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth Victoria, chapter ninety-one, intituled "An Act to authorise the application of Funds of Municipal Corporations and other Governing Bodies in certain cases," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Woodall, Mr. Kenrick, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 81.]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Gardner, Bill to amend "The Public Libraries Act, 1855," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Arthur Acland, and Sir Lewis Pelly.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 82.]

TRUCK AMENDMENT ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cremer, Bill to amend "The Truck Amendment Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cremer, Mr. Walter M'Laren, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), and Mr. Pickard.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 83.]

SHERIFF PRINCIPAL (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Clark, Bill to abolish the Office of Sheriff Principal in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Clark, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Esslemont, and Mr. Lyell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 84.]

ADULT SUFFRAGE AND DURATION OF PARLIAMENTS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Conybeare, Bill to amend the Laws relating to the Representation of the People of the United Kingdom by the Extension of the Franchise to all Adult Citizens, male and female, the Limiting of the Duration of Parliaments to three years; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Cunninghame Graham, and Dr. Clark.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 85.]

PARISH VESTRIES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cobb, Bill to reform the procedure and to increase the powers of Parish Vestries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cobb, Mr. Channing, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Arthur Acland, and Mr. Winterbotham.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 86.]

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN PREVENTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mundella, Bill for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mundella, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Samuel Smith, Sir Robert Fowler, Sir Henry James, Mr. Channing, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 87.]

METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT, &c. BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hughes, Bill to amend "The Metropolis Management Act, 1855," "The Metropolitan Building Act, 1855," and the Acts amending the same respectively, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Hughes, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Tatton Egerton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 88.]

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE EXPENSES BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hughes, Bill to amend the Law in regard to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade Expenses, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Hughes, Mr. Tatton Egerton, Mr. R. G. Webster, and Mr. Isaacs.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 89.]

TRAFALGAR SQUARE (REGULATION OF MEETINGS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Stuart, Bill for the Regulation of Meetings in Trafalgar Square, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Octavius Vaughan Morgan, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Pickersgill, and Mr. James Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 95.]

BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT (1874) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Neill, Bill to amend "The Building Societies Act, 1874," ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'Neill, Colonel Waring, and Colonel Saunderson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 90.]

FISHERY ACTS AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill to amend the Laws relating to the Fisheries of Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Mr. O'Neill, and Sir Charles Lewis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 91.

SOLICITORS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill to amend the Law for the Regulation of the Profession

of Solicitors in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Mr. Maurice Healy, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. O'Hea, Mr. M'Cartan, Mr. O'Doherty, and Mr. O'Neill.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 92.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Joseph Pease, Bill for closing Public Houses on Sunday, making exception for the Sale of Beer during certain hours, and for the Metropolitan District, ordered to be brought in by Sir Joseph Pease, Sir Charles Palmer, and Mr. Isaac Wilson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 93.]

LAND PERPETUITY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill to amend the Law relating to Land held in Perpetuity at variable Rents in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Colonel Waring.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 94.]

QUESTIONS.

A POINT OF ORDER.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): Mr. Speaker—I rise to a point of order. There is a Bill of which I have given notice, but I was not here, because I understood that it would be competent for me to introduce it at the end of the proceedings of this sitting, but I am now led to understand that the First Lord of the Treasury yesterday made a statement that Bills could be introduced first thing to-day. I, and I think a number of others, did not have an opportunity of hearing the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury; and what I would ask you is, whether I have an opportunity of introducing my Bill to-day, not having, by chance, had an opportunity of hearing the statement which the First Lord made yesterday? It appears to me to be very hard.

MR. SPEAKER: I am afraid there is no remedy for it under the circumstances. A very large number of Members have brought in their Bills, and I am afraid the hon. Member must put it down for Monday. I do not think he will be in a worse position.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The First Lord of the Treasury should have given us notice. This was utterly sprung upon us.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH): Sir, may I offer an explanation to the hon. Member? All that I did was simply to draw the attention of hon. Members to the provision of the Standing Order under which they were at liberty to introduce their Bills.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Might I not introduce my Bill as is usually done at the end of the sitting?

MR. SPEAKER: The Clerk will now proceed to read the Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st February.]—[See page 41.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*MR. C. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Mr. Speaker:—Sir, I am very sorry to-day I cannot express my concurrence even in the opening paragraphs of the Address which the House is asked to vote, or even in the first paragraph of the Gracious Speech from the Throne. We are informed that during the brief period which has elapsed since the close of the last Session, nothing has taken place to affect the cordial relations which exist between this country and other Powers. And I cannot help wondering, if that be so, if the cordial relations were as complete as this House was led to believe they were during the past Session, why there should have been such a grave expression—grave coming from the mouth of any Minister, but especially grave coming from the mouth of the Secretary for War—as that the state of the Continent was one of such danger that a European war at any moment was imminent; and from the way in which the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the need of this country being prepared, the only conclusion derivable from what he said was that our cordial relations in some fashion or other had been so endangered as to render it necessary for us to propose to fight if the occasion arose. I should like to ask whatever Minister may speak afterwards whether, it being the fact—because no one looking at the state of Europe can deny it to be the fact—that the whole of the European Powers are armed for

war, that they have been arming for war year by year, certainly for the last 16 or 17 years, some of them longer; that the augmentation has been greater year by year, that in each Chamber the excuse for augmenting in one country has been armament in the other—would ask the Ministry, I say, whether they have entered into any kind of relations, or engagements, or undertakings, or understandings, which, in the event of a war breaking out such as the Secretary of State for War considers imminent, this country is embarked in any, and, if any, in what degree, in the possibility of being entangled in any such war. That seems to me to be a grave matter on which this House would be right to challenge the Ministry for some reasonable declaration, especially when we find that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has already given this House intimation—intimation which has been given somewhat largely outside, less soberly outside—of the intention to apply for some authority to increase our naval armaments. The noble Lord (Lord Wolseley), who is sometimes supposed to be the only capable General in this country, has in Birmingham, under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, extended that demand, which the Government are only putting at this moment for the increase of the Naval Vote, to the whole Army Establishment, and beyond that we have actually got a suggestion from the noble Lord that, it being practically impossible to obtain by the ordinary methods of enlistment a sufficient number of men for the service of the State, Conscription should be resorted to in this country. Now, I am not a supporter of the Government, but I hope that I am always a fair foe to it, and I must say that if it desires to bring about what many of us wish to see—a dissolution of this Parliament—with the utmost rapidity, it has only to introduce some measure of Conscription, and then from one end of the country to the other feeling would be so strong that it would be impossible for any Government, composed of right hon. Gentlemen either on one side or the other, to continue in Office. But, as I judge the signs shown by the Leader of the House, I take it that the Government at present have no notion of anything of the kind, and if I might be permitted respectfully to do so, I would suggest that a General receiving a high salary in connection with his command has neither the right nor the duty to create panics of this kind—panics which might be attended with most disastrous consequences. But even this is not the limit of the panic fever into which we are getting. I have read in *The Times*—I am one of those who place exceeding confidence in some things I read in *The Times*, even if they are only inserted with the intention of ascertaining what people think—I have read proposals which shadow out schemes for the fortification of London. Are our cordial relations in such a precarious condition that the Secretary for War weeps in public over the dangers which the Government see menacing us? He, much more than any other Member of the Government, ought to know about these matters, for he must be especially consulted on this subject. And I hope that he, as well as the Secretary to the Admiralty, will take the proper steps to make clear the grounds of their fears, especially when they see one of the highest Generals in the Army trying to drive the whole of England into a panic. I know that every other country is arming. An hon. and gallant Member, for whom I have great respect, in the course of his speech in the debate last night, suggested that the country would grant the Vote asked for willingly. Now, as far as I am concerned, and as far as the hundreds and thousands for whom I have some small right to speak are concerned, I must say that they will condemn everyone who votes recklessly for war expenditure in this House—who votes for it without seeing real peril—who votes for it simply under the panic cry, which from time to time for 40 or 50 years has left us a record of vessels built in haste gone to rust, and of fortifications which you may now row round, and admire the folly of the Ministry who managed to induce the House of Commons to vote for them, and the passive humility of the people who have been fools enough time after time to pay for them. I ask the Government, especially in view of the fourth paragraph of the gracious Speech from the Throne, whether it is suggested that there is no right to assume that the existing condition of things is necessarily secure from possibility of change, and I will

ask whether there are no engagements with Germany for example? Prince Bismarck speaks with extreme confidence, and I do not want to use language which shall be foolish in relation to possible contingencies on the Continent; but it is a matter of common notoriety that during the last seven or eight months diplomatists both in Italy and France have regarded communications between this country as sometimes justifying as between those two countries the views which fell from the Secretary for War. I would suggest how deplorable such a war would be; how terrible such a war would be; and, friendly as I hope we are both to Italy and to France, I would suggest that it would be a most suicidal matter if, in any question as to the balance of power or prestige of any Ministry, we had been seduced into entering into any engagement which would give one Power colour for supposing that it had either the moral or the physical force of this country thrown into the scale against it. I ask the Goverment expressly to answer this question to this House, and in view of the declarations which have been made in the last few weeks in different parts of Europe, I think every Member of this House has a right to make such an appeal to the Government, if it is only to pacify the feeling which has been excited very often by those who know nothing of what war is, and who have never taken part in it, and who foolishly forget in the security of their editorial sanctum that angry words may anger others, and sometimes produce bitter periods of excitement, from which even wise statesmanship cannot extricate their country. I ask the Government to give us some assurance which will make the people feel that there is one word which has some reality in it, whatever statesmen may be in power. Let us remember that the glory of this country has been made by peace, and not by war. Our prosperity, such as it is—and in many respects in some part of our dominions at present it is very great—our prosperity has not been made on the battle-field—it has not been won at the cannon's mouth—it has not been ploughed with the bayonet's point—but it has been made by the industry and labour of our people, to whom wage is paid, and from whom the reduction of wage comes when the tax bill for war grows in size. I quite agree that the Secretary for War might have had grounds for grave apprehension, but I cannot agree that he was right in so publicly expressing them. It is so easy for people with knowledge of how little Governments do to imagine that when they tell anything at all of their fears, and of our dangers, that they are not telling the whole story, or that they are saying something for a purpose which is behind it all. For example, I have heard it suggested that a statesman of great ability in another country, when asking for an increase of military forces, has often pointed attention to what he has alleged to be the aggressive attitude of a nation whose frontiers run with his own; and, under cover of the feeling which he has thus excited among the people, he has been enabled to obtain from them the Vote he asked. Now I do not want to suggest unworthy motives on the part of any Government, but I do hold that some explanation is due to the country from the Secretary for War, or someone speaking for him, as to why he considered it necessary to sound so grave a note in the face of the nation, if the statements in the gracious Speech from the Throne are borne out by fact, that nothing has taken place to affect the cordial relations between this country and other Powers. It is no answer for the Secretary of State to merely refer to the possibilities of an European war; these possibilities have existed ever since the cession of Alsace and Lorraine, and they have grown larger and larger every day by reason of the increase of armaments on every side; and as a consequence, in France, in Italy, and in Germany, although the armies have grown, so in proportion the hunger of the people has grown larger, and I do put it to this House that often armed peace becomes even more dangerous than war, because day by day it makes the people despairing. Let us take the position of France now. We cannot help recognizing that the people in France, with their huge army, naturally desire some employment for that army, which is very costly, and they look to it for some deliverance from ills which it may possibly deliver them from, and also which it cannot possibly deliver them from. Remember that swords not only break — I would not mind if they only

did that — but they often cut and injure the holders of them, and the possession of them further tends to make enemies of those around one. I felt a little relief to-night when the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division announced that he did not intend to persevere with his Amendment to the Address, because I think that debates on the Address are not very valuable, while Amendments are generally valueless, and ought only to be moved when, as is the case with the Amendment of which notice has been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, they challenge on a grave matter the policy of the Government, and when it is supported by the Leaders of the Party, acting in obedience to the expressions of opinion reaching them from all parts of the country. I ask the Government to remember this in relation to the application they will make for money. On one point last year I felt bound, with not unnatural reluctance, to give some credit to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for I should have preferred the credit to belong to this side of the House—but I gave him credit because I felt that the right hon. Gentleman's policy showed some desire to take practical steps for the reduction of the burdens on the people. I refer, of course, to the saving which he made in the interest payable on the National Debt. But is the Government to spend on the one hand wastefully that which it has saved on the other hand sparsely? Is a shilling to be saved in interest and ten pounds spent on an iron vessel? Is a shilling to be saved in interest, and ten pounds spent on fortifications? Is the nation to be driven into a panic which is disastrous, which demoralizes the people, and makes them feel as though glory is in war, instead of the ordinary industries of life? Unless the nation is peaceable we shall have a revolution—a revolution begotten of hunger. That we may avoid, if we keep on as we have been acting for the last twenty-five years. Even in that period we have increased our naval and military expenditure to much too great an extent; but, if we go on and multiply it, as is now suggested, then the day will come when a pressure will arise under which even stronger Governments than any which we are likely to form in this country will have to give way. The hon. Member who moved the Address used a phrase which I desire to challenge, and on which I am anxious to obtain an explicit declaration from the Government. He said that in their Egyptian policy the Government had been bound by certain engagements entered into with the Egyptian Government by their Predecessors in Office. The protection of the ports of the Red Sea was part of these engagements, and as Suakin was one of the ports, the Government were bound by the engagement made by their Predecessors to keep it. Now I have searched carefully for some proof of this. It is quite possible that I may have missed it, but certainly I have been unable to find any trace of any engagement which can possibly bear that construction. If there be any engagement such as this, I think the House should have been made acquainted with it; and we ought now to learn to what extent we have been and are bound by them. Did the engagement include the protection of Massowah? Are we mixed up with the Italians in this matter? If the Italians are beaten by the Abyssinians, should we have to go to their assistance? According to the Mover of the Address, speaking apparently with the approval of Ministers, and certainly uncontradicted by them, although his words on these very points have been challenged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, we are under engagements as to which the House has no knowledge; and I think, as an independent Member of this House, that I have a right to ask specifically for explanation as to what those engagements are. But then we are told that the port of Suakin was in danger. Why did not the Government do what Sir Henry Drummond Wolff recommended them to do? And instead of embarking in war, why did they not find some Egyptian Mussulman, who alone, they were told, would have any chance of success in negotiating with the Soudanese? What has been the result of your action there? You have killed some hundreds—perhaps some thousands—of Arabs, a brave foe, but no match for your weapons of precision, a foe described in words of eloquence by an hon. and gallant Member no longer in this House, who, speaking with personal knowledge, for he himself had fought

against them, described them in tones which I am sure those who heard him will recall now, as "a brave foe, a gallant foe, whom any honourable man would regret to have to kill." But you have killed these men, and now we are told there is no chance that the attacks on Suakin will be resumed. That is what you said when you killed them before. No doubt every time you go there you kill a number of men, and they can no longer fight against you, but others can. Your butcher's bill grows. You have no right to use England's money; you have no right to use England's men; you have no right to stain the English flag in butchering these Soudanese, whose worst crime is that they are in their own country, and are defending it. We in honour and in loyalty should have been there under no pretence whatever. There is another portion of the Speech which has given me some embarrassment, because my insufficient knowledge of the English language renders it difficult to translate it. It reads thus—

> "The negotiations which I had directed to be opened with the Rulers of Thibet for the purpose of preventing encroachment on my rights over the territory of Sikkim have not as yet been brought to a favourable conclusion; but I hope that further military operations will not be necessary."

Now negotiation is an art, but when the negotiators come in the form of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, in the form of bombarding a position, when the quarrel entirely begins with us, and is one of our own seeking, I think we ought to have other explanations from the Under Secretary for India. When did Thibet begin to quarrel with us? Was it until after we were going to send a scientific exploring expedition there—and a pretty strong one too? The Thibetans probably knew what had been the result of similar expeditions in other countries, and not unnaturally feared the same results would follow in their own. I ask whether, in fact, we did not make the quarrel which has arisen from its very beginning? I suppose we are going to kill the Thibetans as we killed the Arabs, but how far are we going? Are we going to be embroiled with China over the matter? We have not only a war with China to think of. The pressure of the Chinese population during the last twenty years or thirty years has been making itself felt both in the direction of Russia in Asia and England in Asia, and that enormous population may be easily brought into contact with us. Have not the rights we are claiming in Thibet already been claimed by China? Are we to have a misunderstanding with that country? Do not forget that a difficulty has already arisen in connection with the extension of our civilization on the frontiers of Burmah in which we nearly attacked a Chinese fort by mistake. It is recorded in the Blue Books. The wrong line was taken. Is there any possibility of an entanglement with regard to Thibet? Sikkim alone is mentioned in the Queen's Speech, but is that the only part of Her Majesty's great Indian Empire worth mentioning? We have in that Empire altogther 270,000,000 of people under our rule, directly and indirectly. I think they were worthy of some slight mention in the gracious Speech, especially remembering the great Congress which had been held at Allahabad since Parliament was prorogued—a Congress attended by nearly 1,500 delegates, representing some 30,000 or 40,000 natives. They met loyally, as they always have done; they were moderate, as they always are; and would it not have been well if the Government, especially after the publication given in this country to only a part of the words of Lord Dufferin, a nobleman whose statesmanlike career all Englishmen are proud of—words which if they had been selected with a view to mischief could not have been more carefully selected for the purpose, would it not have been well, I ask, if the Government had said some kindly word to those people, especially when from the floor of the House challenge was given to the Government by one of their own supporters, founded on that speech of Lord Dufferin's, to treat that Congress as seditious? I did not hear the ready repudiation of that which I should have expected from the chivalry of the Under Secretary for India, who, in one debate, reminded us how he was the champion of the poor natives of India. I think Lord Dufferin said he regarded with approval and good-will the natural ambition manifested at these Congresses to be associated with the English rulers in connection with their

domestic affairs. I understand that he regarded them as so laudable that in 1886 he tendered to them his hospitality, and I fancy, although I have not the smallest right to put myself forward in any way as the interpreter of what Lord Dufferin might possibly say if he were here, I think I shall not be doing him an injustice if I say he would as strongly repudiate as I repudiate the notion that these Congresses are other than loyal, fair, sincere, real, and praiseworthy political gatherings, the encouragement of which by the Government must tend to facilitate the reforms which Lord Dufferin has said he regards with approval, and which other statesmen have regarded with approval. I hope that the Under Secretary will be able to tell us to-night that the Government—without waiting till the time when India asks by Motion in this House—is considering how much of the claims which the natives in Congress are making may be conceded without injury to the Empire. It is our duty, if we will govern by force, to make that force as gentle as we can by calling to our aid the millions we have already educated, and who have shown themselves capable of taking part in the government of their country. I do not propose to make many observations upon the paragraph in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech as to Ireland, because it would be unbecoming in me to do so in view of the notice of Amendment given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley). But as I may not be permitted to speak upon that Amendment, I would like to record now my earnest protest against the system of government observed in Ireland. Surely it is new in this country for political foes to be tormented and annoyed, as well as arrested. Her Majesty's Government have placed some of the men who usually sit around me on a pinnacle. You have hunted them down, and even arrested them at public meetings. I happened to be at Northampton when the news of the arrest of Mr. Kilbride at Leicester arrived. Several of the railway porters came to me at the Midland Station, and said, "Can nothing be done to prevent this disgrace to Leicester?" and I said, "Yes; turn out the Government." One man said, "That is all very well, but how are we to do it?" I thereupon remarked "The fact is, as long as people who placard themselves as Radicals and people, who were once dreamed of as Liberals and Whigs, allow themselves to keep a Government in power with whose traditions they have no sympathy, simply because of their hatred of one scheme of the other Party, it is hopeless to expect the redemption of our country from the stain upon it until the statutory period assigned for the happy dispensation." Now the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir J. Fergusson) referred last night to England's complicity —that was not the word the right hon. Baronet used—in East African affairs in connection with Germany. The right hon. Baronet spoke with eloquence on the anti-slavery ideal, for which during the last three-quarters of a century England has laboured and paid so much. But does the right hon. Baronet mean to say that the connection of Germany with East Africa has anything to do with the putting down of slavery? Does he not know that one of the most prominent members of the German East African Company, Count Pfeil, said, in language which, if it had been written by an Englishman in England, I would have been nothing loth to describe as brutal:—"I have made German colonization the vocation of my life, and striven to obtain for my country material advantages. These are not obtainable in East Africa otherwise than by the work of the negro, therefore I hesitate not for a moment to say, 'let us force the negro to do what is advantageous to us.'" England, with its pretence of anti-slavery—for in this case it is a pretence—permits Prince Bismarck to say, in the face of Europe and the whole civilized world, "England is with us. We are in entire sympathy. There is complete accord." It fills one with no little shame when he reads that while persons in high position in Germany are boasting that they have our aid in schemes for forcing the negro to do what is advantageous to the East African Trading Company, the official Press of Germany is putting in circulation impeachments of the honour of a man trusted by England's Queen. I shall try during the Session to find an opportunity of raising this subject in some more formal manner. And now I desire to ask the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Baron H. de Worms) to

supply the House with one or two specific pieces of information. I want to know whether, in the country known as Mashonaland, between British Bechuanaland and the Zambesi River, there was some talk of a concession in May of last year, and whether Lord Knutsford then declared that Her Majesty's Government would give no countenance to any concession or agreement, unless it were concluded with the knowledge and approval of Her Majesty's High Commissioner? To that I expect I shall get an affirmative answer; and, having got that answer, I want to know whether, since the Prorogation, the Government had become aware that Lobengula has made a concession of certain rights to a Mr. Rudd, the nominee of Mr. Rhodes, a partner in business transactions, as stated by the papers and vouched by the share list, of the High Commissioner himself, of the De Beers Mining Company, and whether, just prior to the concession being granted, or at the actual state, Sir Sidney Sheppard, the Representative of the Government, was present at Lobengula's Kraal? What report he made to Sir Hercules Robinson, and how it is that Mr. Rhodes, who was represented at the shareholders' meeting as the proxy of Sir Hercules Robinson, could have been permitted by the Government to be the real recipient of the concession under the name of Mr. Rudd? I acquit Sir Hercules Robinson of anything more than this: I allege that no Representative of Her Majesty in the position of High Commissioner, being a shareholder in a company, should permit a concession to be granted to the nominee of a gentleman who appears in the list of the company as his proxy. The concession has been granted, and I deny that Her Majesty ought to permit or encourage concessions or monopolies of any of the rights in any of Her Majesty's dominions. I pray the indulgence of the House, but this seems to be a matter which ought not to pass without some word.

*MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, South): I regret very much that some right hon. Gentleman on the Government Bench has not risen to reply to the very able address of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) before I proceed to ask the House to direct its thoughts to another matter mentioned in Her Majesty's gracious Speech. The particular part of the Speech to which I wish to refer deals with the manufactures and industries of Ireland. It points out that the early attention of the House will be asked to measures for developing the material resources of Ireland. I remember that not very long ago, when the Conservative Government came into power, their promises were very numerous indeed as to their intention to devote some of the revenues of the three Kingdoms to the development of the industrial resources of Ireland. The noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) used some very remarkable words, and many Members of the Conservative Party expressed to me their great delight that it had fallen to the lot of the Conservative Party to make amends for the past, because England owed Ireland a good deal in that respect. If we carry our minds back to historical periods, we find that Irish industries were ruthlessly crushed out of existence by direct legislation under William III. But, great as the destruction was by that legislation, the destruction has been greater still by the indirect results of the Act of Union. Before I proceed to show the results in this respect of the Act of Union, let me draw attention to the state of Irish trade during the existence of the Irish Parliament. The Irish people have often been accused of slothfulness, of not being suited or adapted to successful enterprize in the direction of manufactures, but I pray the House to pardon me while I read a few paragraphs from a book entitled "Two Centuries of Irish History," which, I think, will set that matter at rest. At page 104 it is written—

> "The truth is, as British official records show, that the Irish trade and manufactures, so far from being in a perishing condition at this period, had sprung up with marvellous vitality and flourished exceedingly. Thus the British manufacturers gave evidence that their trade in soap and candles to North America and the West Indies had 'much decreased of late.' 'To what causes do you attribute this decrease?' asked the Lords of the Committee of Council. 'We impute it,' was the reply, 'to the possession the Irish have now got of that trade; we export but very few candles now to the West Indies.'"

Some idea of the progress made in Irish manufactures may be formed on

learning that from 1780 to 1783, both inclusive, the general export of new drapery, or fine sorts of woollen goods, rose from 8,600 yards to 53,800 yards in round numbers; and of new drapery, or coarser kinds, from 420 yards to 40,500 yards. Only 1,000 yards of fustians were shipped to America in the first year, whilst 47,000 yards were exported in the last. Other Irish manufactures were pressing forward in a similar manner, and some of these products were appearing in foreign markets. What I particularly desire to point out is that this great increase, as it was a great increase at that time, occurred under very great difficulties and restrictions; because we have it stated in the book from which I have quoted that whilst British ports were shut against manufacturing Ireland, Irish ports were open to British goods. Notwithstanding this, Irish trade went up by leaps and bounds. I also find that the Irish fisheries were very prosperous in those times. It will be remembered by many hon. Members that in the time of Lord Beaconsfield there was a discussion upon the subject of fisheries. I remember well that the leader of the Irish people at that time, Mr. Isaac Butt, proceeded to Glasgow to defend the Irish people from the accusations made against them by Lord Beaconsfield, that they were too lazy to develop their fisheries. I think it will be seen from the quotation with which I will now trouble the House that when the Irish people were masters of their own destiny, when they were encouraged in their industry, they compared favourably with others, and even excelled those with whom they were compared. It is said at page 107 of "Two Centuries of Irish History"—

> "Men were brought from Ireland to teach the natives of Uist the manufacture of kelp from seaweed. Others were brought to the Shetlands because of their dexterity in fishing, and because they could go out two months earlier and proceed much further to sea than could the natives in their small boats. The inhabitants of Barra learned fish curing from the Irish fishermen, who had a Highland fishery."

They went even further a-sea, and established their "great fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, which," in 1875, "increases daily." This was due, be it noted, to the energy and enterprize of the old natives of Ireland, who, homeless in their Fatherland, poured out by the two and three thousand annually, and remained abroad as residents, in spite of all discouragements. The British who went usually returned. Newfoundland was practically founded by Irish Catholics. The Irish fishers were honest dealers, as well as skilled curers. Though the Irish herring barrel contained only 28 gallons and the Scotch 32, the former sold "at an equal or superior price." So high stood the Irish name that their herrings sold "14½ per cent. dearer than the Scotch." They were never charged with the "fraud, perjury, and all the tricks which ingenuity could invent to rob the public"—such as partly filling barrels with stones and rubbish—which had almost entirely destroyed the sale of British herrings in European markets. That is the testimony as to Irish industry and the success of Irish manufactures taken from British official sources, and under the disadvantages I have named, when there was a higher tariff in England and a lower tariff in Ireland, when there were practically open ports in Ireland and closed ports in England; and yet, notwithstanding all these drawbacks, Irish industries prospered under their Home Parliament. There were in 1800 ninety master woollen manufacturers, supplying 4,918 hands in Dublin; but in 1840—forty years after the Union — the interest was dead. Similar was the fate of the wool combers. In 1841 no less than thirteen carpet manufacturers, which existed at the time of the Union, were blotted out of existence. In 1800 there were 2,500 silk loom weavers, and in 1840 not one remained. In Kilkenny there were fifty-six blanket manufacturers, employing 3,000 hands, but in 1822 there was not one of those factories left. At Balbriggan there were 2,500 calico weavers, and in 1844 only 228. In Wicklow, in 1841, there were none of the 1,000 handloom weavers that found employment there in 1820. In Cork there were in 1800 1,000 weavers of braid and 2,000 worsted weavers, 3,000 hosiers, 700 wool combers, and 2,000 cotton weavers, and in 1841 not a single individual was employed in these industries there. These figures, though they may be tedious to the House, prove my contention that the Act of Union, in an indirect way, had a more detrimental effect on the trade and

industry of Ireland than the direct legislation of William III. The fostering hand of the Irish Parliament was taken from these industries, they lost the advantage of Protection laws, while at the same time laws of Protection prevailed in England—or, if there were not laws of Protection, there were at least bounties given for the exportation of English manufactures; and these manufactures found their way freely into Irish ports thereby under-selling Irish products. There is not a river, stream, or brook in Ireland on which there cannot be pointed out the crumbling walls of a decayed factory, alike a manifestation of the past industry of the people, and the cupidity, intolerance, and incapacity of the unkindly rulers of the country. We were promised by the Tory Government a fine thing, but these promises have not been fulfilled, nor is it stated in Her Majesty's most gracious Speech or hinted at by any of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite what the nature of these efforts will be. Will they be confined merely to again bringing forward those schemes for the drainage of the Bann, Barrow, and Shannon? This no doubt would benefit agriculture in the neighbourhood of these rivers, benefit an industry that at the present time is well known not to pay, but what will be done to revive the lost industries of Ireland sacrificed to the cupidity of the English people? Many Members opposite have told me privately they thought England could not tax herself too much in order to recoup Ireland for the great losses suffered in the past, and certainly there is fine material for the Government to use in that direction. The Irish people are an artistic people. If they had not been confined almost entirely to agricultural operations they would have excelled in manufactures that demand the exercise of artistic instinct. It is a well-known fact that in all the operations that demand the exercise of artistic ability, and where Irishmen have the opportunity of competing, they carry off the prizes. There is no large drapery establishment in the three kingdoms, where an eye for colour and harmony is required, where Irishmen and Irishwomen are not appreciated. We know the women who make Limerick lace display an innate artistic sense that cannot be excelled. I was told in Cork the other day by a gentleman who is acknowledged to have been most successful in the commercial world, a gentleman who is known to many opposite who just now smiled at my remarks, Sir John Arnott, who, besides being proprietor of the *Irish Times*, has been engaged in the drapery business, that for the conduct of his large departments he was at first obliged to engage Englishmen and Scotchmen, but now, not only had he only Irishmen in his Irish establishments, but when he wanted men with an artistic eye and mind for an establishment elsewhere out of Ireland he found such among the Celtic race in the South of Ireland. You have all the material in Ireland for building up successful industries if you wish to set about it in the proper manner—if you wish to return to the Irish people what you stole from them in the past. I am curious to know what the proposals of the Government will be. I can assure them that if they tax this country and make proposals for reviving Irish industries they will receive considerable support on their own side of the House and in the country from conscientious people who have read Irish history, grieve for the injuries inflicted upon Ireland in the past, and are willing now that reparation should be made. I do not know that I have anything further to say on the subject. I merely advert to it because I do not think it will form part of that more important debate which will take place next week. I look forward with curiosity and anxiety to learn the proposals of the Government, and to see whether they are honest in their professions and will redeem their promises in a manner to redound to their credit and the advantage of Ireland.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST, Chatham): I am sure the hon. Member for Northampton will believe that it was from no want of courtesy that I did not reply to him at once. He raised some very important issues, some of them connected with the Department for which I am here responsible, and I was anxious to see whether anyone else on the opposite side desired to follow the hon. Member and urge on the Government the considerations he has advanced. Of course the power of the Government is limited; they can only speak once, and we might have been hereafter taunted with having too readily

rushed upon the attention of the House, not giving other Members an opportunity before the Minister rose to reply. Now I never like putting myself in opposition to the junior Member for Northampton, because I find the principles which he enunciates in his speeches are so sound and generous that I can only attribute the unfortunate application of them he sometimes makes, to his judgment being warped by his occupation of a position in that quarter of the House, and I fancy that if I should be so fortunate as to live to see the day when the hon. Member for Northampton is himself a Minister of the Crown I shall find that he will come round to the opinion that Governments, both Liberal and Conservative, sometimes try to do right, and that all their actions and intentions are not so terribly immoral as Gentlemen sitting in that quarter of the House affect to believe. I can speak with some personal knowledge, for, like other hon. Gentlemen, I have sat in that portion of the House, and I can assure the hon. Member that the opinions which an outsider is apt to form of the intentions and designs of a Government are not so just as at the time they sometimes seem to be. The hon. Member complains, first of all, that he has not had satisfactory assurance of the extreme solicitude of the Government to maintain peace abroad. Now, I really do not know what assurance the hon. Member can require, because no longer ago than the beginning of last Session his hon. Colleague, who is extremely vigilant in watching the Government, on the 10th of February demanded an assurance of this kind. He was then told by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs that no engagement pledging the material action of this country had been entered into by Her Majesty's Government which was not then known to the House. My hon. Friend, being further catechized as to what he meant by material action, replied that an engagement of material action implied military responsibility. Well, the hon. Member was not quite satisfied; he returned to the charge on February 14, and then quoted some statement which appeared in a Vienna newspaper, and asked whether the statement that Her Majesty's Government had entered into any undertaking to render material assistance to a European Power under certain contingencies was or was not correct? My hon. Friend referred to his former statement, and said he had already stated "we are under no engagement pledging the country to military, and of course in this he included 'naval,' action, except such as was already known to the House," and in a debate which subsequently took place my hon. Friend, speaking with that caution and sense of responsibility which distinguishes him, and with that accuracy of information which attaches to the Representative of the Foreign Office, entered at greater length into the subject, and in the strongest and most distinct language declared Her Majesty's Government were not parties to any engagement or any kind of entanglement which might oblige this country to enter into any kind of aggressive operations, military or naval. Well, of course, it is the business of hon. Members not to be satisfied with any assurances the Government may give, and the only objection I can see to the frequent reiteration of these pledges is that a Government always protesting may possibly seem to protest too much. If the Government were to accommodate hon. Members with a declaration whenever it was called for, it might be assumed that there was some ulterior purpose, some hidden design. I do not know whether hon. Members will accept an assurance from me, speaking in the hearing of Members of the Cabinet, and representing the India Office, which is the Department of Government most liable to engage in war; but I can assure hon. Gentlemen there is no object which Her Majesty's Government more sedulously strive for than the maintenance of peace in every part of the Empire; that there is nothing which the Government regard with so much horror as the calamity of being compelled, under any circumstances, to have recourse to the violence of war. I cannot help thinking that the hon. Member scarcely bears sufficiently in mind the difference between aggressive and defensive warlike preparations; that is one of the political lessons which experience of Office would very likely teach him. The Government of the United Kingdom—I do not care whether Liberal or Conservative—must be a Government of peace. But it must also be

a Government of defence; and all the military and naval proposals ever made to this House by any Government are never made in the interests of aggression, but of defence. The hon. Member for Northampton, in that general and airy way in which he sometimes expresses his political opinions, says that military and naval expenditure has, during the past twenty-five years, been far too largely increased. But I think it would be better if hon. Members would give some specific instances of such expenditure during the past twenty-five years which is now disapproved of. If it could be pointed out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the provision made for military resources, for the Navy, or for materials to meet the possible contingency of war, is too large, I am sure such observations will receive the attention of my right hon. Friend; and if it could be shown there is good ground for the opinion, I am sure he and Her Majesty's Government would have good reason to rejoice. But I venture to differ with hon. Members, and I believe the general opinion is that, so far from there having been excessive naval and military expenditure, this expenditure has, during the last twenty-five years, been reduced to an imprudent and a dangerous point, and it is the general public opinion that the time has come when, in the interest, not of aggression, but of the defence of the Empire and its commerce, it is necessary to review our naval and military expenditure, with a view to increasing it. And now, in regard to the special topics alluded to, I would remind the House that most of them have relation to the Department of Foreign Affairs, and would have been dealt with by my hon. Friend, if he were able again to address the House. I hope, however, the hon. Member will accept me as a substitute, though I cannot speak with an equal sense of responsibility, or display the same familiarity with details. The first topic on which the hon. Member for Northampton favoured the House was a sort of after-clap of the debate on the Suakin Expedition. The hon. Member is very courageous in reminding the House of that debate—an older Parliamentary hand would have been less ready to recall the prophecies and predictions with which we were then favoured, and which were so signally falsified by the result of events. I do not understand that Her Majesty's Government committed themselves to the admission that this country is under engagement with the Egyptian Government to protect either Suakin or any of the Red Sea ports, but it is undoubtedly the fact that this country has pursued the policy of defending the Red Sea ports of the Egyptian Government, not only during the tenure of Office of Her Majesty's present Advisers, but during a considerable course of time and in pursuance of that continuity of foreign policy which on most subjects prevails.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I quoted exactly the words reported in the *Times* to the effect that in their Egyptian policy the Government were bound by certain engagements entered into with the Egyptian Government by their Predecessors in Office, and to those engagements they loyally adhered. The protection of the Red Sea ports was part of these engagements, and Suakin was one of those ports.

*SIR JOHN GORST: I do not know and of course cannot answer as to the accuracy of the report, but clearly what is meant is that happily on most subjects the foreign policy of the country is continuous. The policy instituted by our Predecessors in Office is in its main incidents faithfully followed out by the Government of the day. What is meant is this—that previous Governments had entered into a certain course of policy in reference to the Red Sea ports, had made engagements—not in the sense of Treaties by which a Government is legally bound, but had commenced a course of policy which the present Government felt bound to carry out. I would remind hon. Members of one or two passages in which that policy is set out in despatches from Lord Granville. In a despatch of December 13th, 1883, and to be found in the Egyptian papers presented in the following year, Lord Granville advised the Government of the Khedive to come to an early decision to abandon all territory south of Assouan or Wady Halfa—

> "Her Majesty's Government would then be prepared to assist in maintaining order in Egypt proper, and in defending it as well as the ports on the Red Sea."

Then again on January 2nd, 1884, in a despatch to be found in the same Blue Book, Lord Granville used these words—

"Her Majesty's Government will on their part be prepared to assist in maintaining order in Egypt proper and continue to protect the ports on the Red Sea."

I refer to these passages to show that the policy which was instituted at that time was one of defending Egypt proper against attack, and in Egypt proper they included ports in the Red Sea, Suakin among the number. This the present Government did when Suakin was threatened, not by the tribes inhabiting that district, but by dervishes coming from a long distance off who had invaded that territory. Her Majesty's Government did that which their Predecessors had on certain conditions engaged to do; they assisted the Khedive. Unfortunately the defence of Suakin was not effected without a certain amount of loss of life, which everybody must regret. So far as may be judged from the present state of affairs at Suakin, Her Majesty's Government have succeeded in preventing the danger which once appeared to threaten Egypt. I will not pursue that matter further, but I must express my astonishment at the observations which the hon. Member for Northampton has made with reference to Sikkim. The hon. Gentleman has asked me to inform him when the people of Thibet began quarrelling with us. The hon. Member is able to answer that question just as well as I am. They began quarrelling with us when they invaded the territory of Sikkim with an armed force, when they built a fort on British territory and occupied that fort for a considerable time. It is really monstrous to say that the Indian Government has manifested an aggressive disposition in the operations which have been recently carried out. All that the Indian Government has done in Sikkim is this. After enduring for an almost unreasonable length of time the presence of this hostile and invading force in their territory, after giving to the Chinese Government ample time as the Suzerain Power to compel its vassal to remove this gross outrage and insult to a friendly Power, the Government of India at last, when every effort had failed, expelled from their own territory the wrongfully invading force, and abstained from anything like a counter-invasion. I do not suppose that the history of the world has exhibited a greater example of forbearance than the stoppage of the victorious Indian Army on the frontier of Thibet and the absence of any kind of revenge or retaliation for the gross outrage received by the Indian Government. The hon. Member asks what are the negotiations? The negotiations now in progress are going on under the auspices of the Government of China, which has in the most loyal manner done its utmost to prevent the incursions of its vassal on Indian territory. These negotiations have for their object the maintenance of peace on the Sikkim frontier, without the necessity for the large body of troops which, in the present condition of affairs, has to be kept there. The hon. Member has asked whether we are likely to be embroiled with China. No, Sir; there is no likelihood of that. On the contrary, the affair of Sikkim has cemented the friendship between this country and China. In a time of trial the Government of China behaved in a most loyal manner to the Government of the Queen. The loss of life which has occurred at Sikkim is not in any way attributable to any want of co-operation on the part of the Chinese Government. It is simply the case of rebellious vassals acting in opposition to the advice and commands of the Suzerain Power, and persisting, in its fanatical zeal, in throwing itself against the British rule, receiving thereby a lesson which I hope there will be no necessity to repeat. A most extraordinary charge has been brought by the hon. Member against the Speech from the Throne, because it contains no mention of India. It contains no mention of India because, I am happy to say, there is nothing connected with our Empire in India which at the present time demands the attention of this House of Parliament. The prosperity of India is so great, the welfare of the people is advancing so rapidly, and everything in India at the present time is so prosperous, that if this House would look nearer home, and would endeavour to make some other provinces of this Empire as quiet and as orderly as India, perhaps the time of Parliament would be better occupied. The hon. Member for Northampton appears to think that some declaration or statement should be made in this House

about the Congress which has been held. The newspaper reports of the speech delivered by Lord Dufferin are not altogether complete or accurate. I have constantly warned Members of this House against trusting too implicitly to the newspaper reports. It is one of the misfortunes of hon. Members like the Member for Northampton that they read something in a newspaper, that they at once believe it, and rush down to the House to ask if something very shocking has not been done. I hope that the experience of Lord Dufferin's speech will convince the hon. Member that Indian newspaper reports of speeches are not entirely reliable. I have not seen the speech, but I am not surprised that Lord Dufferin should, in eloquent language, exhort the Government of India to show some sympathy with the desire of the natives of India to share in the government of that country. I have never been instructed by my noble Friend the Secretary of State to say a word against the aspiration of any native in India to take part in the government of that country. Moreover, I venture to say that no responsible official of the Government of India has said anything which could discourage any loyal and proper aspiration on the part of any individuals in India to take part in the government of India. What has been found fault with, both by Lord Dufferin and other high officials in India, notably Sir Auckland Colvin, is not the Congress, but the action of some of the people bywhom the Congress is supported, the language of some of the newspapers which profess to write in the interests of the Congress, and the character of some of the pamphlets published in India under the sanction of some of those who took part in the Congress. That is all that has ever been denounced by any official of the Crown. The fact that some of the natives of India are anxious to take part in the government of the country, and appreciate the importance of being associated with Europeans in the management of the affairs of India, has always been sympathized with and welcomed by the Government. Let me quote a single extract from the speech to which the hon. Member for Northampton referred. Lord Dufferin, speaking at Calcutta on the 30th of November last, said—

"In the earlier stages of England's connection with India, and even after the force of circumstances had transmuted the East India Company of Merchants into an Imperial Executive, the ignorance and the disorganization of the Peninsula, consequent upon the anarchy which followed the collapse of the Mahomedan *régime*, necessitated the maintenance of a strong uncompromising despotism, with the view of bringing order out of chaos, and a systematized administration out of the confusion and lawlessness which were then universally prevalent. But such principles of government, however necessary, have never been congenial to the instincts or habits of the English people. As soon as the circumstances of the case permitted, successive statesmen, both at home and in India itself, employed themselves from time to time in softening the severity of the system under which our dominion was originally established, and strenuous efforts were repeatedly made, not only to extend to Her Majesty's subjects in India the same civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by Her Majesty's subjects at home, but to admit them, as far as possible, to a share in the management of their own affairs. The proof of this is plainly written in our recent history. It is seen in our legal codes, which secure to all Her Majesty's subjects, without distinction of race or creed or class, equality before the law. It is found in the establishment of local Legislative Councils a quarter of a century ago, wherein a certain number of leading natives were associated with the Government in enacting measures suitable to local wants. It lies at the basis of the great principle of decentralized finance which has prepared the way for the establishment of increased local responsibility. It received a most important development in the municipal legislation of Lord Northbrook's Administration. It took a still fuller and more perfect expression during the administration of my distinguished predecessor in the Municipal and Local Board Acts; and it has acquired a further illustration in the recommendations of the Public Service Commission recently sent home by the Government of India in accordance with which more than a hundred offices hitherto reserved to the Covenanted Service would be thrown open to the Provincial Service, and thus placed within the reach of our native fellow-subjects in India."

Those few words of Lord Dufferin's express summarily what I could show in detail. My view is that there is no greater, no falser charge ever brought against the present administration of the Government of India than that of either attempting or desiring to or actually excluding natives from the administration of Indian affairs. If the hon. Member were aware of the number of municipal bodies, the number of local boards that now exist throughout the Empire of India, he would be astonished that he has addressed to the House the observations which he has made.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I do not quite understand the hon. Gentleman as to whether the last words he read meant that the Government were contemplating any extension in the direction indicated.

*SIR JOHN GORST: I intended to convey the impression that the policy of the Government of India for the last 30 years has been, and still is, on every possible occasion to extend to the natives of India not only a share in the administration of the Government, but the right of managing their own affairs so far as it is possible for them to do so. The hon. Member next spoke of Zanzibar. I was surprised that the hon. Member should attribute to the German Government and to the German people opinions so entirely opposed to their professions and their practice. In a despatch from Lord Granville to our Ambassador at Berlin, dated May 25, 1885, which is to be found in the correspondence relating to Zanzibar, Lord Granville showed that the Government of that day viewed with favour the colonizing schemes of Germany, the realization of which would retain for civilization large tracts of territory over which no influence had been exercised, and also the co-operation of Germany with Great Britain in the work of the suppression of the slave gangs. On the 3rd of November, 1888, the German Ambassador intimated to the Prime Minister that Germany proposed to Her Majesty's Government a blockade, with the consent of the Sultan of Zanzibar, of the coast of East Africa, in order to suppress the exportation of slaves and the importation of arms and munitions of war. Again, in the Reichstag, Prince Bismarck made a speech, in which he stated that, while he did not look as a whole on the blockade as being very essential, he had seen in its establishment a proof with regard to the African coasts that Germany and England were united; and it was considered to be very important that the natives of the coast should have an impression that a complete understanding existed between the two Powers and Zanzibar. The German Government invited Her Majesty's Government to join in this blockade for the purpose of preventing the continuance of the slave trade. If the Government had refused to join they would have been departing from their usual policy, because the repression of slavery is the foremost article of their political programme on the coast of East Africa, and we stated to the German Government, through Lord Granville, that we look to her for co-operation in accomplishing this end. It is difficult for me to answer all the prepared attacks of the hon. Member upon a department with which I am not officially connected. I regret that the hon. Member's speech was not made before the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs addressed the House. As the number of Members constituting Her Majesty's Government is limited, and as no Member is allowed to speak more than once, if any hon. Member desires to ventilate a grievance of a similar character to that just made he must not find fault because he cannot receive that careful reply which perhaps the merits of the case may demand.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): Although I rise with the view of asking the attention of the House to a different portion of Her Majesty's Speech, I cannot proceed without saying that I really think the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) has scarcely sufficiently appreciated the seriousness and earnestness of the protest made by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). The Under Secretary says Her Majesty's Government have omitted nothing which they could possibly have done or said to show their abhorrence of war and their desire for peace. Well, I do think that in the second paragraph of the Speech they might well have expressed some regret for the lives that have been lost in the "operations"—as they are called — which have been carried out. But we never find anything of this kind. Whenever blood is shed, unless it happens to be a great and calamitous outpouring of the blood of our own countrymen, there is no expression of sorrow, but, rather, triumph is proclaimed. Now, I think that if a different tone were adopted with regard to the horrible occurrences of war Her Majesty's Government would show somewhat better than they have done their detestation of war and their desire for peace. The Under Secretary says there is all the difference in the world between

aggression and defence, and he tells us that the wars of this country—at any rate under the present Government—are never in the interests of aggression, but always for defensive purposes. Well, when in the whole history of the world did anyone hear a Government say anything else? Did any Government ever confess to making an aggressive war? If you turn a man out of his house and bolt the door after him you call it "defensive operations" when you resist his attempt to get in at the window. And this is the way politicians, generally, argue about aggressive and defensive wars. Then the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary scarcely appreciated, I think, what the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton said as to the German colonial operations. It seems to me that much more weight should be attached to the German operations than the hon. Gentleman seems inclined to give to them. Her Majesty's Government show a wholly insufficient appreciation of public opinion in this country on this matter. Look at the third paragraph in the Queen's Speech:—

"I have consented to take part in a Conference with Germany and the United States at Berlin upon the affairs of Samoa, in continuation of that which was recently assembled at Washington."

As far as we can understand it, this country has been much more intimately associated with Germany in these negotiations than it has been with the United States, and yet, surely, we are more akin to the United States than to Germany. We have more traditions in common with them, and I cannot but believe that public opinion in this country desires to see rather a fraternal, close, and intimate alliance with the United States, than an intrigue and conspiracy with a despotic power of Europe. But the Government can play on public opinion when it pleases them. In one of the paragraphs of the Queen's Speech there is allusion to the Convention that has been entered into for the suppression of bounties on the export of sugar. Now I do not for a moment deny that the Government have in the country a certain amount of public opinion to back them up; but that opinion is generated by sectional interests, and it is an opinion that takes altogether a mistaken view even of those sectional interests. There has, undoubtedly, been a considerable outcry about the injuries done to our native labour by the bounties given to foreign sugar; but when we come to the actual facts we do not find that outcry to be fairly and logically justified. I will refer to a Return that the House was good enough to order on my Motion last Session—No. 353, containing a previous Return as to the importation of sugar, and the various sources from which it is brought, and the amount of labour employed in refining. This Return, in table 19, page 26, shows that, in estimating the amount of labour employed in refining at 30 hands per 100 tons of sugar, and making no allowance for labour-saving machinery, in 1880 there were 4,450 persons employed in sugar refining in this country. In 1884, although sugar bounties had been in full operation, the number so employed was 5,200—a very respectable increase, and this notwithstanding that machinery is certainly decreasing the number of hands that are necessary to do the same amount of work. In 1888 the number had fallen to 4,260; but those who examine the Return will see that there are a great many reasons which may possibly account for that decrease besides the influence of foreign bounties. A considerable number of changes have been made in the *modus operandi* of refining; different classes of sugar are required now from what were used formerly; different methods are adopted, and there is a constant increase of labour-saving machinery. Consequently it may be that this diminution of hands is owing to a passing crisis affecting the trade; but even if that is not so, I ask does a diminution of 940 hands employed in the sugar refining business justify our disturbing the commerce of the whole country? Does that small decrease in the number of people previously employed in one particular industry — not a very great one—justify our doing anything that would threaten to deprive 36,000,000 or 37,000,000 of our population of cheap sugar? I never heard of a proposal of so vast a nature being made upon a narrower basis than this. But there is something more to be said. The Return also shows that there has been a constant increase in the number of hands employed in industries which depend

considerably on the cheapness of sugar. The hands so employed in London and the neighbourhood are 6,000, and in the whole kingdom there are at least 12,000 men, women, and children employed in the confectionery and other sugar industries, as against 4,000 or 5,000 employed in sugar-refining. There are other facts which go far to show that our sugar-refining business cannot be suffering to the extent that has sometimes been alleged. The same Return shows that in the production of raw sugar the British cane plant supplied, in 1872, 11 per cent. of the total production of the world, and in 1888, after all the injury alleged to have been done by sugar bounties, British cane supplied precisely the same percentage. The absolute quantitywas, in 1872, 325,188 tons, and in 1888, 542,290 tons—not so large an increase as has taken place in other trades, but still an increase that should not be despised. Of course, beet-sugar has increased enormously; but the Return shows that the increase of beet has been mainly at the expense of foreign cane, which has diminished by about 5 per cent. This further point is to be noted—that between 1872 and 1887 the imports of raw sugar increased more rapidly than the imports of refined sugar. Thus, in 1872, the imports of raw beet sugar into the United Kingdom amounted to 1,959,630 cwt., and of refined beet sugar to 1,719,000 cwt. But, in 1887, the raw imports had risen to 9,223,856 cwt., or had been almost quintupled, while the refined imports had not been quadrupled, the figure at the later date being 6,220,453 cwt. Now this preponderance in the increase of raw imports cannot be accounted for by the needs of brewers. It shows a growth in the demands of our home refiners. I cannot see that the sugar-refining industry of this country is falling off, at any rate to such a degree as would justify our entering into a Convention with Foreign Powers, which may have the effect of requiring us to exclude the cheap sugar that is a great benefit to our poor population. I ask what justification Her Majesty's Government have for asking for so great a change of the law as they seem likely to propose in this matter? What is this boasted Convention? Her Majesty's Government gathered together Representatives of a certain number of foreign nations, and there was great difficulty in getting them to agree. Concessions were made, and, after all, France made her consent to the Convention conditional on all the great sugar-producing countries in the world, including, I suppose, the United States and Brazil, coming under it. Well, of the United States the Government evidently has no hope whatever. The United States simply decline to enter into the Convention on any terms. Brazil is willing to do so if all other sugar countries are willing, and I do not therefore see that there is any very clear prospect of that country entering into the Convention either. Let us note this in addition, that France makes her consent dependent on America and Brazil being included, and that Austria makes her consent dependent on the inclusion of all the cheap sugar-producing countries in Europe in the arrangement. How can we have a satisfactory Convention when such a state of disagreement exists among the nations who profess to enter into it? But even if there had been greater agreement, I hold that a more retrograde or more mischievous step has not been proposed for years than that of depriving the mass of our people of the cheap sugar they now enjoy for the benefit of a very small fraction of the population. It may be said that the Convention could work without raising the price of sugar in this country; but that assertion is hardly consistent with the complaint that our sugar refiners cannot compete with bounty-fed sugar on account of the cheapness of the latter. It is against the essential and fundamental principle of Free Trade to deprive our poor people of the right to go into any market in which they can honestly buy at the lowest possible price. Suppose the good people of France or Germany were to offer to make a present of some 50,000 bags of sugar to the poor people of our country, I wonder would the hon. Gentleman, the Under Secretary for the Colonies prohibit the importation of such a handsome present? I do not believe it for a moment; but that is precisely the effect that will be produced by this Convention if it works prohibitively. Let it be granted that our people do receive sugar more cheaply than they ought to do—all that it means is that they get more sugar for the same

price than they would otherwise get—that is to say, they get something besides what they would receive if sugar were at a higher price. It may be said that this works unfairly upon the labour of foreign countries. I fear it may. The system of bounties is thoroughly unsound and strongly to be condemned; but the people of France and Germany at any rate do this thing with their eyes open. They think it is a benefit to them. We know that it is not a benefit to them, but a benefit to us. But still, if they, with their eyes open, willingly of their generosity offer to our poor people this good, I want to know what sound political doctrine requires us to refuse it? No, Sir; the true policy of this country is to show its unshaken faith in Free Trade; and once we begin to limit its operation here, and to take precautions there, we shall soon be landed in naked Protection. When other nations see our Government going about cap in hand requesting them to enter into a Convention of this character they will say that England has lost her faith in Free Trade, and that, too, at a time when the soundness of its doctrine is triumphantly manifested by the superiority of our commercial position to that of all other countries in the world. In conclusion, I take this opportunity of giving fair warning that whatever legislation is necessary for carrying out this Convention will certainly be opposed tooth and nail.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh N.): I was not able to put the Question I had on the paper to-day with reference to the action of the Australian Colonies in regard to the difficulty in Samoa. The Question I had on the paper was with reference to the representations made by the Federal Council of Australia to the Imperial Government in regard to the Samoan Question. I should like to ask the Under Secretary if he can explain to us the position of Her Majesty's Government with reference to the Australian Colonies on this question? The Australian Colonies are affected by the question more nearly than the people of the United States, of Germany, or of this country, and they have a strong feeling that they ought to be directly consulted in reference to it. At the Conference which is to take place at Berlin, the Representative of this country should be charged with special instructions upon behalf of the Australian people. We know very well that the Islands of Samoa are regarded by the Australian people with a certain amount of jealousy, and the action which I feel very much inclined, and which a great many people are very much inclined, to call the piratical action of the Germans in Samoa, has created a very nasty feeling amongst the people of the Colonies. I think it would have been as well if, in the Speech from the Throne, some statement had been made in reference to the representation which has come from Australia on this question. The right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India has referred to the friendly terms upon which this country is with the Chinese Government. But this is a question also on which the Under Secretary for India can inform me. Last Session I had occasion to put several questions to him as to the negotiations between the Government of this country and the Government of China on the question of Chinese emigration to the Australian Colonies. That is a question upon which the Australian people feel very keenly. I think it would be much more satisfactory if, in Speeches from the Throne, the Government made it their business to put in a paragraph with reference to the interests of the Australian people. You expect the Australian people to be thoroughly loyal to this country, and to submit all their foreign relations to the Government of this country, and yet there are several pressing questions—there is the question of Chinese emigration to Australia, upon which the greatest interest is felt throughout all the Colonies, as I have reason to know—of which mention of some kind might have been made in the Speech from the Throne, together with a deal more about the interests of those people in the Colonies. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in the first place whether it would not be possible at this Conference, so nearly affecting the interests of the Australians, for an Australian Representative to be present with the representatives of the United States and Germany; and, if not, whether the Government will take into consideration the representations made by the Australian people on this question, so that the British Ambassador

when he goes to Berlin may be in the position of speaking in a thoroughly representative way? I also wish to know whether there is any information upon the question of Chinese emigration to Australia? I think the right hon. Gentleman may be in a position to answer me upon this point, and it would obviate my having to put a Question on the paper next week.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Toxteth, East): The hon. Member for Northampton, whose absence from the House I regret, has alluded to some concession which was given some short time ago, and which he alleged ought not to have been granted, assuming that Her Majesty's Government had the power to prevent the granting of concessions. The territory in which the concession has been granted was simply within the sphere of Great Britain's influence, and, although Her Majesty's Government had power to advise, they had none to prevent the grant of the concession. He proceeded to educe from the fact that because Sir S. Shippard visited Mashonaland he was responsible for the grant made there. As a matter of fact, Sir S. Shippard was simply concerned to investigate the Grobelaar incident, and to prevent a collision between two chiefs, Khama and Lobengula, and his visit had nothing to do with the concession. The hon. Member for Northampton has made a grave charge against Sir Hercules Robinson. He has suggested that the concession had been improperly granted through influence exerted by Sir Hercules Robinson. I must say the history he gave of the case was somewhat peculiar. The hon. Member stated that Sir Hercules Robinson was a shareholder in a certain Company; that the agent of that Company had acted as the proxy of Sir Hercules Robinson at a meeting; that a person acting on behalf of that agent had obtained the concession in question; and that, therefore, it was by the influence of Sir Hercules Robinson that the concession had been improperly obtained. Well, Sir, I need not point out that in everyday life men who are shareholders in Companies are often called upon by circular to give proxies to someone else, but I have never yet heard that they were responsible for the subsequent action of their proxies, especially in the degree maintained by the hon. Member. It is only fair to Sir Hercules Robinson to read an extract from a letter written by him on the 15th of January last, to the following effect:—

"As to gold mines, gold shares, and gold syndicates and concessions, over which the people in London as well as here seem to have simply gone mad, I have never touched one of them, and am, neither directly nor indirectly, interested in anything of the kind. In the furious scramble for concessions which has taken place the wildest falsehoods are invented."

There is, then, no foundation for the statement that any influence has been brought to bear for the granting of this concession by Her Majesty's Government. The country in question is not under a British protectorate, but simply in the sphere of British influence. All the Government can do is to advise the chiefs not to foolishly grant concessions. We cannot prevent their so doing, but it is our endeavour to protect them and the investing public as far as possible. With reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for Fermanagh, the Government has not received the resolution in question relating to Samoa, though we know by telegram that it is on the road. It would be absolutely unnecessary for Australia to be specially represented at the Conference on Samoan affairs, because the representation of Great Britain would insure the representation of all Imperial interests. With regard to the Chinese Question, I have nothing further to add to what I said in answer to the hon. Member last Session. We have had no further representations from the Colonies on the subject. Of course, should there be any representations they will certainly not be carefully considered by the Government.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman will remember that he informed us that, in consequence of the representations from the Colonies last Session on the Chinese Question, Her Majesty's Government had entered into negotiations with the Chinese Government, and it is with reference to those negotiations that I proposed to ask a question.

*BARON HENRY DE WORMS: The result of those negotiations is not yet known, and that is a matter which does

not concern the Colonial but the Foreign Office. Well, now, Sir, I pass to the observations made by the hon. Member for Leicester on the Sugar Bounties Question; and perhaps you will allow me to say that I was truly surprised that the Representative of a working man's constituency should take so remarkable a view of the question. He wanted to limit it strictly to two points. The first was, according to his statement, that there were very few workmen employed in the sugar industry in England, and that, therefore, it would matter very little if these men were deprived of the trade in which they were engaged. The second was a very wild and not justified assumption, that the price of sugar would rise enormously, and that it would be impossible for the working man to put it into his tea.

*Mr. J. A. PICTON: I hope the hon. Gentleman will allow me to explain, and that he will give a more moderate interpretation of what I said. I certainly never said anything of the kind the hon. Gentleman repeats. I said that the price of sugar would be, to some extent, raised. I say, however slightly it is raised, it must affect the consumers, but I never dreamt of saying that it would be raised enormously.

*Baron HENRY de WORMS: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. I understood him to say that a point of his opposition to the Convention was that the price of sugar was raised considerably.

*Mr. J. A. PICTON: No.

*Baron HENRY de WORMS: Then, of course, the hon. Gentleman's argument seems one to which it is not necessary to attach much importance. If the rise of sugar is to be infinitesimal, I do not think the hon. Member should put that against depriving a large number of working men of the means of subsistence. The hon. Gentleman dealt with the question as if a wicked Tory Government was trying to injure the working classes by raising the price of sugar. The hon. Gentleman cannot have informed himself of the facts. For 24 years this question has been treated by successive Governments: for 24 years the Sugar Bounties have been condemned.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Brightside): Hear, hear!

Baron Henry de Worms

*Baron HENRY de WORMS: I am very glad the right hon. Gentleman agrees with me. I must say, as a matter of fact, I am at a loss to think why the hon. Member for Leicester should be so alarmed at this particular moment, as if we had originated the question of the abolition of Sugar Bounties. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) condemned the Sugar Bounties long since. In 1879 the right hon. Gentleman wrote to the Working Men's Anti-Bounty Association these words—

> "My desire is that the British consumer should have both sugar and every other commodity at the lowest price at which it can be produced, without arbitrary favour of any of those engaged in the competition; but I cannot regard with favour any cheapness which is produced by means of the concealed subsidies of a Foreign State to a particular industry, and with the effect of crippling and distressing capitalists and workmen engaged in a lawful branch of British trade."

The hon. Member for Leicester has assumed that only five or six thousand workmen are employed in the sugar trade; but from the Returns that have been furnished to me by the Trades Council it will be seen that the figures differ to an enormous extent from those put forward by the hon. Gentleman. I find that, taking the sugar trade and the other trades immediately connected with it, there are no fewer than 50,000 workmen employed, and it is stated that this number is being considerably diminished, if not entirely ruined, by the action of the Sugar Bounties. Therefore, the figures of the hon. Member for Leicester are not supported by the more authoritative statement of the Secretary to the Trades Council of this country; and, moreover, I would say that if the hon. Gentleman, who is associated with a constituency containing so large a number of working men, would take the trouble to consult members of that body, he would, I think, find that the view they take of the matter differs very materially from his own. I have received a resolution in favour of this Convention, signed by 423,000 working men representing the Trade Unions of the country, and I present this document as an answer to hon. Members who have hitherto been so loud in their assertions that we, on this side of the House, do not know how to interpret the opinions of the working classes, and are entirely out of touch

with them. I have no doubt that when the hon. Member for Leicester tells his working men constituents in Leicester that they are in the wrong they will be very much gratified by the assertion. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Mr. Cossham), speaking on the same subject last night, remarked this legislation was simply class legislation as against mass legislation. [Several hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!] Hon. Members say "Hear, hear!" Then, Sir, I claim that the classes and masses are identical; because, if the working men of the country are in favour of the Convention, it matters little to the classes whether they have to pay a farthing per pound more for their sugar. There are other figures showing in what way the foreign bounties have injuriously affected the Sugar Trade; but I do not propose to weary the House by going into them in detail, as I shall have occasion to speak again upon the subject. I wish, however, to place on record that, while formerly we received but 6 per cent of beetroot sugar, since that article has had the advantage of bounties the imports of it into the United Kingdom have advanced to 58 per cent, while the cane sugar imports (mainly from the British Colonies) have declined, for the same reason, from 94 to 42 per cent. —rather a striking diminution. Sir, we have heard a good deal said about the cheapness of sugar, and how the families of the working classes would be affected by the abolition of the sugar bounties, and how detrimental would be the effect on the jam industry. One of the largest producers of jam in this country, Mr. Keiller—[an hon. MEMBER: Marmalade!]—well, marmalade is a form of jam, and contains a very large proportion of sugar—wrote to the *Times* a short time since, and stated that, from his experience, he was entirely in favour of the Convention; but he did not believe it would make the slightest difference in the price of sugar. And why should it? Does the hon. Member opposite believe that the whole of the bounty finds its way into the pocket of the consumer? Does he suppose that the large sums which have been given by France, Germany, and other countries, will be diverted from the producers to the consumers? If so, he is greatly mistaken, for it undoubtedly finds its way into the pockets of the manufacturers, and not into those of the men who eat it—and this is the cause of the opposition offered on the part of those who receive the bounties. It is they who have opposed the Convention, while the Governments of foreign countries have only been too anxious to get rid of these bounties as a heavy charge on their Exchequers and on the taxpayers of the country. Does the hon. Member for Leicester suppose that non-subsidized manufacturers can produce on equal terms with those who are subsidized? The makers of this country cannot possibly compete with others who receive 20 per cent. from the State. And if this is so, what do we find to be the result? The result of the unequal competition is that the sugar trade of this country and the production of our Colonies are actually being killed. It does not pay to send the sugar of the West Indies to this country, and consequently a large portion of it is being sent to America. [An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] Perhapst hose who cheer consider it better that we should allow the sugar of our Colonies to go to America, while we consume foreign bounty-fed sugar. And when the hon. Member for Leicester says there are only a small number of persons employed in this trade, I ask him whether, assuming the number to be only five or six thousand, are they to be allowed to starve, or go to the workhouse? Admitting the accuracy of the hon. Member's figures, it is a curious argument that because only a small number of workmen are affected we should allow an industry to die out. But the House must consider that, besides diminishing employment in this country, we are absolutely ruining some of our sugar-producing Colonies. In some of them—in the West Indies, for instance—land to the extent of thousands of acres has come down to prairie value, simply because it does not pay to produce sugar. If it be held that, simply in the interest of cheapness, we are justified in destroying industry at home and sacrificing native industry in our Colonies, then hon. Members will not be convinced by any argument I can advance; but the position is not one that will commend itself to the common sense and good feeling of the nation at large. The hon. Member for Leicester says it is admitted that bounties ought to be

condemned: that is a statement I have seen made before by gentlemen who write long letters to *The Times*. The hon. Gentleman says bounties ought to be condemned because they are bad things; and I put it to the hon. Member what is the use of condemning bad things if you do not get rid of them? An expression of pious opinion may be extremely interesting, but its intrinsic value is infinitesimal. It is said, however, that if you do away with bounties you will increase the price of sugar. I deny that proposition entirely; because if the bounties are done away with the effect of the abolition will be that our Colonies will again produce, as they were formerly in the habit of doing, large quantities of sugar. Does the hon. Member believe that if the sugar bounties are done away with the sugar industry of the Continent will cease? If he supposes anything of the kind—if he thinks the sugar refineries of France and Germany will be closed by the abolition of the bounty system, he is very much mistaken. The sugar producers are agreed that this bounty, which the hon. Member supposes finds its way into the pocket of the consumer, in reality finds its way into the pocket of the producer; and the only result of its abolition, so far as he is concerned, will be that the producer will have to content himself with the smaller and more legitimate profit that would thus be left to him. The English market will still remain the great sugar market of the world; the demand will continue to be the same, and the supply will continue to meet the demand; but with this result—that instead of the foreign refiner making the large profit he now obtains, he will have to be content with a smaller profit. It will be impossible to form a "corner" in sugar, because by the time the Convention comes into force the Colonies will have again developed their industry, and this country and the Colonies will be able to fill any gap that may be artificially created. If this be so, I want to know how the price of sugar can rise? The price of sugar can rise only if the supply be not equal to the demand. When it is said that we are preventing foreign countries from giving us cheap sugar, I should like to ask what is the doctrine of cheapness? How are we to prevent foreign countries from giving us cheap sugar? I am now about to state a doctrine which, though it may seem paradoxical, will, nevertheless, commend itself to common sense—that is to say that you may buy cheapness too cheap. I mean by this that if you do not inquire into the origin of the cheapness—as you certainly ought—you may do a vast amount of harm to the community by endeavouring always to get the cheapest article; because when you obtain the cheapest article you may obtain it at the expense of the suffering of your fellow-creatures. An evidence of this is furnished by the sweating system. If hon. Members want to get the cheapest article, why do they not advocate the resumption of slave labour in the Colonies?

MR. PICTON: Because it is not cheap.

*BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Then, if it were cheap, am I to understand that the hon. Member would advocate it? But, at any rate, slave labour is certainly cheaper than the labour for which you pay, and on that principle hon. Members ought to advocate the re-establishment of slave labour. Then the hon. Member for Leicester says the Convention is inimical to the principle of Free Trade. I deny that proposition entirely; and I think I can prove my point by a reference to the view expressed by one who was a prominent Member of the Party to which the hon. Gentleman belongs, and an authority on the Free Trade Question, at least, as eminent as the hon. Member himself. Mr. John Stuart Mill, in his "Principles of Political Economy," said—

> "If the slaves in the Southern States were all emancipated, and their wages rose to the general level of the earnings of free labour, that country might be obliged to erase some of the slave-grown articles from the catalogue of its exports, and would certainly be unable to sell them in foreign markets at the accustomed price. Their cheapness is partly an artificial cheapness, which may be compared to that produced by a bounty on production or exportation, or, in order to emphasize it, considering the means by which it is obtained, an apter comparison would be with the cheapness of stolen goods."

If the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leicester simply looks at the element of cheapness, it is an undoubted fact that that would be cheaper which could be obtained for nothing than that which you are obliged to obtain in the ordinary way. I maintain that the action of the Government is an action

that will be beneficial to the masses of the people in this country—that this is not class legislation, but mass legislation. We have felt—not the present Government alone, but successive Governments for nearly a quarter of a century—that the bounty system is absolutely indefensible in the case of shipping and other matters, as well as in that of sugar. The hon. Gentleman appears here in the character of Representative of Leicester. I should like to ask him a question. Will the hon. Member address a meeting in Leicester and advocate the importation into this country of hosiery on which a bounty had been paid by Germany? But if he does not advocate a bounty being given by Germany on hosiery—which she could perfectly well do—how is it he does not agree with Her Majesty's Government in supporting the abolition of bounties on sugar? Surely he cannot make a distinction between one article and another? If we are justified in receiving bounty-fed sugar, we are equally justified in receiving bounty-fed hosiery, or any other article on which on which it might please foreign countries to give a bounty. If such a state of things becomes general, the home trade of this country will in a very few years be almost ruined. This is not a question of free trade; it is a question of unfair trade. Free trade is what the French call *libre échange*—a free exchange. Does the hon. Gentleman maintain that because we open our ports free to every article we are bound to allow all articles with a bounty in advance to come in and compete with our own goods and destroy our manufactures? So long as we get the goods somewhat cheaper, it seems, according to the hon. Gentleman, not to matter whether or not a few thousand workmen starve. If we have thousands of workmen out of employ, what becomes of them? Why, they and their families become chargeable to the rates. On the mere question of money, independently of the far greater humanitarian and industrial question, the position of the hon. Gentleman is absolutely indefensible. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that certain countries had not agreed to the Convention, and that Austria has only agreed to the Convention on the condition that all the countries in Europe should also agree. That is not strictly accurate. Austria said she would reserve her right to reconsider her position if certain European countries did not accept the Convention, and France also said she reserved to herself, under Article VIII., the right to come into the Convention during the limits of time. Now, Sir, with regard to the prohibitory clause, which so excited the hon. Gentleman's ire, I do not think the hon. Member has carefully read the Convention, for the clause only comes into effect by the voice of all the signatory Powers to the Convention. It is a joint arrangement made by all the Powers for the purpose of suppressing the bounty system, which they see is iniquitous. Surely all who have the interests of the masses at heart must feel great relief that, after this question has during 24 years been considered by successive Governments, Her Majesty's present Advisers have been fortunate enough to convince foreign Governments of the folly of the bounty system, and by that means enable our own sugar trade once more to thrive, and to hold out some hope to our Colonies that a revival will take place in the value of land devoted to the cultivation of the sugar plant, and that an industry which flourished for so many years may once again take the place it formerly enjoyed.

*SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): I am afraid what I intended to say, which would not have amounted to a speech at all, but simply to a request to obtain information from the Government, is useless just now, as there is no Member of the Government present. My object was to state that this is a subject of such large dimensions, and of such enormous importance to the working classes of this country, that it is perfectly impossible to discuss it satisfactorily or adequately upon the Address in reply to the Queen's Speech. I will not attempt to discuss it upon such an occasion. All I wanted was an assurance from the Government, if any Member of the Government had chosen to be in his place at this time, that there would be an ample opportunity afforded for the discussion of this question. The Queen's Speech speaks of a "legislative provision." Now that legislative provision might be brought forward on such a narrow basis that you, Mr. Speaker, might say we cannot discuss the Convention upon it. In view of the

possibility of such a ruling, I want an assurance from the Government that they will give us the fullest opportunity of discussing the whole Convention. [The Chancellor of the Exchequer at this point returned to his seat, and Sir Lyon Playfair repeated his request, and went on to say]: For my part, I think the Convention an essentially bad one. I think that it is impracticable in its working, and that it will bring us into collision with other countries if its powers are put into execution. Under it we have to give up our free will, and have to trust to a majority of other nations as to whether sugar imported from other nations is bounty-fed or not. Thinking that the Convention is a bad one, and believing also that the working classes will suffer very injuriously by it, we on this side of the House, or, at least, many of us, are exceedingly anxious to discuss the matter in the fullest way, but think it would be quite absurd to attempt to discuss it upon the Address in reply to Her Majesty's gracious Speech.

MR. R. A. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale): I think hon. Members have a great cause of complaint that they have not had an opportunity hitherto of discussing this important matter. There are some people who think that all Treaties and Conventions should be brought before the House at an early stage. I certainly think that a Convention of this character, which deals with most important questions, and which is so entirely at variance with the commercial principles which this country has so long professed, should have been laid before Parliament before the Government committed themselves so deeply to it. I must confess that if the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Baron H. de Worms) were now present, I should condole with him on the circumstances under which he made his speech: he, an ardent free trader, was supported by two of the most ardent Protectionists in the House. I only hope the same cheers will await the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he undertakes what the *Times* told him the other day would be the most difficult task of the programme he has before him this Session. The whole circumstances under which this Convention has been made are of the most humiliating character to this country. Surely no more humiliating spectacle has ever been revealed than that of the hon. Gentleman (Baron H. de Worms) going about the Continent endeavouring to get up this Convention. No one who reads the Report of the Convention that has been issued can doubt for a moment that the hon. Gentleman was either willingly, or unwillingly, the mere tool or dupe of those with whom he was conducting the negotiations, and that the Representatives of countries, Protectionist themselves, were only too glad to win so cheap a triumph over one who professed to be so ardent a free trader. It is true he posed very largely as an adherent of the Free Trade policy; but he seemed only too ready to lower his flag at the first summons of the foe. The hon. Gentleman, whose lavish hospitalities were the theme of so many eulogiums, was careful from time to time, by way of keeping up the farce at which he was assisting, to raise his professions in favour of that very Free Trade which, in my opinion, he was deliberately betraying. When the moment for delivering the final stab came—when on the 7th of May he announced the adhesion of the Cabinet to countervailing duties—he declared the final surrender to those demands which are absolutely hostile to the principles of that Free Trade which we believe to be so essential to the welfare of our country. And the right hon. Gentleman, in the closing address he made to his dear Colleagues before the Conference separated, said that Great Britain "has shown no symptoms of a return to the Protectionist policy against which the nation declared many years ago." The hon. Gentleman made some allusion to the fact that sugar would not be made dearer but we are all accustomed to his arguments on that point. We have some strong authorities we can quote against him. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) came to the conclusion, in 1881, that the price of sugar would be increased by no less than a farthing a pound, which meant a tax of three millions sterling on the great masses of the people. The London Workmen's Anti-Bounty Association came to exactly the same figure; and Mr. Giffen, in 1884, was of opinion that the tax put on the working-classes would amount

to no less than five millions sterling. We all condemn bounties; but what we object to in this Convention is the way in which these bounties are to be put an end to. On the reading of the Report of the Commission, it seems to me that we have been led into a deliberate trap by the Government. There is no pretence that the Government were not fully warned of what was coming at the Convention; they had most ample warning from the very first. The British Sugar Refiners' Committee, so long ago as the 18th of August, 1887, said that without countervailing duties the whole scheme would fall to the ground. The Prime Minister then said the proposals of the Committee should be considered when the proper time came. Again, they had ample warning when the first declaration in favour of the penal clause was made by the Spanish delegates in 1887. And so, when at last penal clauses were announced, though they were not in the draft, the right hon. Gentleman said he was delighted to hear the opinions of the delegates. He knew too well that these opinions of the delegates were held from the very first, and that in their view without prohibitory clauses the whole thing would be a farce, and he went through the farce all the time of pretending he was a Free Trader. After all his Platonic declarations in favour of Free Trade, he allowed the delegates to proceed entirely in their own way. The delegates played with their victim for a considerable time; they dined and supped with him; they were captivated by the "charm and ascendancy of one who directs our debates with so much authority." They deferred, they said, to the master of the house; but the time came when they must have their pound of flesh. The French delegates said that business was business for them, and the penal clauses were inserted. I do not think the answer satisfactory in regard to the absolute failure of the Convention, looked at from the point of view that so many countries are not prepared to join in it. The United States hold aloof altogether; France and Austria only join on certain conditions; and so it is a very partial Convention after all, and many countries may never join it in the end. It places us entirely at the mercy of the majority of the Protectionist countries, and it is the greatest blow that can be struck against those Free Trade principles which we have so long professed. I know quite well there are many centres of population where, to a certain extent, the proposals of the Government are popular. They are popular in Greenock; but I see that the Sugar Bounties Convention did not succeed in winning a vote of confidence in the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sutherland), who represents that constituency. I believe the people only require to be instructed on this question to see that what they gain on one small point they will lose on many others, as the result of the step must be a Protectionist policy all round. If it does not affect the price of sugar, what use will it be? You are going deliberately to impose a tax on the working classes of this country which will go into the pockets of a few manufacturers, as all these duties do. It is said that many men are thrown out of employment by the present system. I believe they are; but I believe that many are now employed who would not be employed under the proposed system. I hope it will be a long time before this country goes back from the principles she has so long professed. It would lessen our imports, and that would not be to the advantage of the shipping interest of the country. It would lead to retaliation, and set a bad precedent, and I do not see where you can stop. It would take more powerful arguments than I have yet heard to make me support these proposals, and I hope that they will not be carried. I was astonished to hear that they were to receive the support of so old a free trader as the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That support of his is another step on the downward path which leads him away from those financial principles of which he has been so stern an exponent. The nations which pay the bounties find them a crushing burden; they amount in France and Germany to three and a-half millions, and in Austria and Belgium to one million. I believe that if no action had been taken they would soon have come to an end in the natural course of events. An hon. Friend tells me that France has given them up.

*BARON HENRY DE WORMS: She has not. The amount of the bounties in France is about £3,380,000.

*MR. R. A. ALLISON: Anyhow, I believe the burden is becoming so crush-

ing that the French would soon give the bounties up. We have come to the rescue, and have done so by fettering ourselves with chains not imposed on other nations. We are taking a backward step, and it is for these reasons I oppose the proposals of the Government. I hope they will be fully discussed, and I trust the House will not pass them without hearing some very much better arguments than those we have yet heard.

Mr. T. SUTHERLAND (Greenock): As the House will have another opportunity of discussing this matter, I do not propose to discuss it at any great length now. But I think I should be wrong if I refrained from saying a few words on a subject which affects so deeply the constituency I represent. The speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Allison) does not seem to me to call for any lengthy or elaborate reply. There were two points—two only—in the speech of the hon. Member which struck me as of the slightest importance. The first was that he was most distinctly an ardent Free Trader. That, of course, goes without saying, because, with very few exceptions, every Member of the House is a Free Trader. The next point was that he is not only an ardent Free Trader, but that he highly disapproves of bounties. It will be observed, however, that between his disapproval of bounties on the one hand and acceptance of the practice, though not of the principle, of bounties on the other, there is a wide gulf fixed. It appears to me, if, as it is admitted on all hands in and out of the House, bounties are at variance with the principle of Free Trade in every respect, if they are prejudicial, and part and parcel of the Protective system, then I should like to ask the hon. Member who has just sat down, and others, what is their remedy, what they would have us do? I would ask, in weighing and considering this question, whether it is likely to be more advantageous to this country that this pernicious system should continue to exist, or whether it would be better to put an end to it by such means as we now have in our power? In the first place, I am disposed to agree with my right hon. Friend opposite, that it may be possible to do a vast amount of harm to trade simply for the sake of mere cheapness; but, while I will not attempt to carry that argument any distance, for it remains with those who oppose the Government to show that it will necessarily follow that the price of sugar will be enhanced if these bounties are put an end to, and free and unrestricted competition takes place throughout the world, I believe hon. Gentlemen will have great difficulty in proving a case of this kind. I believe, on the contrary, that by the removal of these bounties you will stimulate enterprize not merely in the trade with which my constituency is concerned (refining), but you will stimulate enterprize throughout our Colonies, not only in the West Indies, but in our great Australian Colonies, where enterprize at present in connection with the production of sugar is wellnigh dormant. If bounties are removed, and Free Trade operates throughout the world in relation to sugar production, it is impossible to imagine that we shall not have a larger, better and cheaper supply than we have at present. Therefore, it appears to me that the action of the Government is simply in the interest of Free Trade, entirely in the interest not only of industrial centres in this country connected with this particular produce, but in the interest of the great consuming class who will obtain, I believe —I do not say at once, I do not say that a revolution in trade will be immediate —but who certainly will under unlimited production obtain a better and cheaper article than at present. There is a fact to be borne in mind, a fact constantly omitted in the speeches of doctrinaires, that the fluctuations in the price of sugar in consequence of our dependence on this bounty-fed article have been enormous, and almost dangerous. Now if the Government had come forward with a proposal, a proposal that has been frequently advocated in places where sugar industries exist, to place on all bounty-fed sugar from all parts of the world a countervailing duty, certainly I should not have supported the Government in such action, notwithstanding the fact that it would have been in the interest of the particular industry with which my constituents are associated. I would not have supported the Government in a proposal to place a countervailing duty on sugar coming from all these countries where the bounty system prevails. In the first place, I believe it

would be impossible to impose a really equivalent countervailing duty; and, in the next place, such action would have had the effect of keeping out a large proportion of the raw material now used in this country. The course Her Majesty's Government have adopted is entirely different and much better. They have endeavoured — and I believe that they have so far succeeded by diplomatic action to bring about a general agreement among the Powers of Europe—to put an end to this system which the hon. Member has just denounced, which he has admitted to be pernicious and opposed to the principles of Free Trade. While commending the Government for their action in this direction, and sincerely expressing the hope that they may succeed in giving effect to those efforts, I would point out that their action has a wider significance than merely in relation to the article of sugar. It is a most important point gained by this and every Free Trade country that there should be a general agreement arrived at among the Powers of Europe, as it were, to determine to put an end to the bounty system entirely. I do not say that result is immediately to be brought about; but I say it is a most valuable concession for this Government to have achieved in connection with sugar, because it leads up to and involves a larger principle affecting far greater industries than that of sugar. Of course, I have more particularly in my mind the system that exists in connection with bounties on shipping. Hon. Members are, of course, aware that France and Italy at present have a system of large bounties to enable their Mercantile Marine to compete with other countries, and with this country chiefly. It is commonly supposed that these bounties are productive of little or no injury to the shipping trade of this country; and I am bound to admit that, so far as the matter can be tested by the progress of our Mercantile Marine, that certainly would appear to be the case. But I could, if necessary, point to individual cases of loss and hardship arising out of this system of a singular and large character. One instance I may mention with which I am personally familiar, the competition of a well-known Italian public company in the trade between two English Colonies. The Rubatino State line of steamships is under the patronage of the Italian Government in a sense not understood here, and the bounty system encouraged the Company to intervene in the trade carried on between two English Colonies under the English flag, and the loss to shipping under the English flag trading between Bombay and Hong Kong is in consequence of a very serious character. The competition of France and Italy in our commerce and with our Mercantile Marine is not very serious, taking it on a large scale; but what I am apprehensive of, and what I have dreaded for years, has been that Germany would extend her bounty system in this direction. We know that in ordinary commerce Germany is the greatest competitor this country has. It is a fact I became aware of through the examination of some papers circulated last Session that the progress of Germany in external trade has been relatively greater than of Great Britain during some years, except so far as our trade with our own Colonies is concerned. Taking the rest of the world, Germany has advanced her external trade in a greater ratio during more recent years than we have advanced ours. Therefore I confess, seeing what the tendency of the German Government has been, seeing how extremely anxious they have been to extend their operations to the most distant parts of the earth, seeing that they have lately been subsidizing large fleets of vessels in Australian and Chinese waters, not on account of German commerce existing, but for the German commerce that might be created, I confess I have been apprehensive that if the bounty system should be allowed to continue there would be, and there may be even now, very great danger that Germany would not be content with bounties affecting sugar, but would extend this evil system to industries of far greater importance. It is not possible to imagine the irreparable loss this country would suffer if this Convention were not to take effect, and the German Government, finding it did not take effect, were to take it into their heads to extend the bounty system to other industries.

MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): I had only intended to take up a short time in reference to agriculture, a

subject with which I feel more competent to deal; but the allusion of the hon. Member for the Eskdale Division to myself as a well-known Protectionist who applauded the speech of the Under Secretary for the Colonies leads me to make some reply. I do not think the hon. Member, anxious as he was to appreciate the remarks of the Under Secretary, was thoroughly well up in his subject, and this I think has been clearly shown by the hon. Member who has just spoken, and who, as a Free Trader, has thoroughly supported the Under Secretary for the Colonies. That in itself is significant, and affords a complete answer when answer is required. I was alluded to as a Protectionist, and without contradicting or disclaiming the title, I may say that I have taken the greatest interest in finding out what are the views of British workmen on this and kindred subjects. I have learned the views of many of our British workmen from attending meetings which were being addressed by gentlemen of the politics of the hon. Member opposite, and so-called Free-traders. I will refer to one important speech made by a Trades Unionist on a similar question to this. I will give the place and sufficient data to enable hon. Gentlemen to correct me if I am in error. It was at a meeting held at Sudbury, in Suffolk, a year or two ago, when a large number of operatives in the trade of mat weaving were out on strike. They were addressed in the Market Hall by a Trades Unionist, who came from London with half-sovereigns and half-crowns to enable the men to stand out on strike, and the speech that gentleman made was flavoured with a good deal of Radical politics, and I believe his audience mainly consisted of Radicals. The point in the speech I wish to allude to was this—

"My men, said he, the grievance you have to complain of is this, that your masters have issued a catalogue of prices of goods they sell which they have made so low to undercut catalogues issued by similar manufacturers, in other parts of England. You must do everything you can to insist that such a state of things shall not go on."

Then he went on to insist

"that no master should ever issue a catalogue of prices which did not comply with the conditions; first, that prices should leave the master a fair margin of profit, but what was of far greater importance, such prices as would enable the master to give his workmen fair and just wages."

These propositions were cheered to the echo by the men. The speaker then proceeded to declare that,

"People who bought the mats should never object to give threepence or sixpence more, if this money enabled manufacturers to comply with these conditions."

Things conveyed in this practical way make more impression than much theory; and this meeting made a great impression upon me. I believe the man was perfectly right, and I believe the operatives of England have a right to demand that consumers should give such prices as will insure the fulfilment of these conditions. And now to a subject in which I am more at home. We have had every hobby trotted out by hon. Gentlemen opposite—speeches from advocates of temperance, grievances in connection with the Sister-isle, the claims of Scotland, and even gallant little Wales has not been altogether quiet. Compared with other subjects that have divided the interest of the House, agriculture has not occupied much attention. I am glad to find that this time, in the gracious Speech from the Throne, there is something more than an expression of sympathy for the depressed state of agriculture. A little help is worth a great deal of pity, and we find expressed an intention to deal with three subjects directly interesting to agriculturists—namely, tithes, the formation of a Board of Agriculture, and a cheaper form of transfer of land. These are subjects that have been talked about for a long time, and I believe both Parties have held out hopes of bringing in measures to put matters right in connection with these subjects; but, somehow or other, up to the present, they have always been shelved. I hope there will be no shelving of these matters this Session, and that the Government will make every effort to add useful measures in this direction to the Statute Book. The tithe question is most important to the agricultural interest, and I believe a settlement of it is more important still to those who love the Church of England. The opportunity now offers to deal with it in a manner satisfactory to all parties concerned; but if this opportunity is neglected, I fear the settlement will be carried out

by the enemies of the Church. I would advise every friend of the Church not to be too greedy as to the terms by which it may be proposed to carry out a much-wanted reform. I hope it will be remembered that, as to a great portion of the agricultural tithe-bearing lands of England, the tithes have become a burden hardly to be borne. I know farm after farm in the Eastern Counties where to-day the tithe equals, if it does not actually exceed, the rent. But into the tithe question I will not now enter, but with the greatest earnestness I appeal to the front bench to carry the measure through this Session, and I would urge hon. Members to display their sympathy with one of England's greatest, oldest industries, and not to allow Party politics to prevent a useful measure being carried to a beneficial and satisfactory issue. With regard to the Board of Agriculture, I will only say that all must admit that the time has come when England at least should have as well equipped a Board of Agriculture as those countries who compete with our farmers in the English markets. Proposals for cheapening the transfer of land should, I think, meet with the approval and support of Members, no matter on which side of the House they sit. Many hon. Members on the other side have advocated it, and argued that agriculture will never return to the proud position it used to occupy until means are given to small farmers to purchase their holdings. I do not myself believe that so long as the advocates of so-called Free Trade are successful, the possession of farms large or small will be of much benefit; but, at the same time, I hold that everyone who thinks he can make a profitable purchase of a small farm should have every facility for the trial. Before I sit down, I, with respect, but without fear—for we farmers have got beyond fear, and if we do not speak out now, when may we?—I would refer to a remark that fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid-Lothian. I was surprised to find the right hon. Gentleman throw out a prophecy, or a hint, in the remark that he doubted very much as to whether the Government would really pass these measures. No doubt, if the obstruction of last year is repeated, the passing of such measures will be prevented, and I am afraid that the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid-Lothian may fairly be supposed to have meant, "If you do not take care what you are about, we will see that these measures do not pass." I hope that was not the right hon. Gentleman's intention; but such an interpretation will be given to his words in many a country village during the next few days. I feel that the farmers of England have been most patient, and their Representatives in the House of Commons have been most loyal in their support of the Government. We wish to continue loyal; but, at the same time, our grievances are such that we think that in the name of fairness we have a right to claim more attention for those grievances in the future than they have had in the past.

MR. STUART RENDEL (Montgomeryshire): It is not often that any Welsh Member attempts to intervene in debate so early in the Session, and especially in the debate upon the Speech from the Throne. But, under present circumstances, the Welsh Members would err greatly, and do an injustice both to themselves and their constituents, if they did not attempt to take an immediate occasion of making themselves heard. Last year the Welsh Members were singularly unfortunate in securing an opportunity. The Speech from the Throne this year is marked by the absence of one particular measure which has appeared in several previous Speeches, and unfortunately it is also marked by the presence of a measure to which the Welsh Members entertain a most deeply-rooted objection. The measure which we miss is that for establishing a system of intermediate education in Wales. Previous Speeches from the Throne have contained a reference to that measure as one of urgency and justice. Therefore in this respect Wales, instead of keeping its position, is losing ground in Parliament. It is true that as a private Member I have obtained leave to introduce a Bill on the subject, but it is obvious that a measure of such importance cannot be carried through Parliament except as a Government measure. Until this Parliament it cannot be said that Wales has ever been heard in this House distinctively as Wales. Before the operation of the Ballot Act there

was only the representation of a class in Wales, and of a class which desired rather to Anglicize Wales than to recognize it in any way as possessing a nationality and character of its own. It was only after the passing of the Ballot Act that the people of Wales really obtained representation. The first result of a real representation was to show that in no other part of the kingdom was there so much political unanimity as in Wales and such definite political aims. In that state of things it is desirable that if nothing can be done to forward Welsh views care should at least be taken that nothing is done which would distinctly create dissatisfaction in Wales. Now, a very large majority of the Welsh people will regard the Tithes Bill announced in the Queen's Speech as a reactionary and aggressive measure. A Tithes Bill such as the Government introduced last Session, if regarded as a remedy for the evil, would be a remedy much worse than the disease itself. The avowed object of the Tithe Bill was to meet what was considered to be a dangerous agitation in Wales. The abatements asked for at the time of the agitation were conceded by a considerable proportion of the beneficed clergy. Collisions might never have occurred in Wales if it had not been for those bodies of owners, the least deserving of any sympathy from the public, who proved the hardest, the most unbending, and the most determined to resist to the bitter end the demand which the beneficed clergy themselves had conceded. One of those bodies was Christ Church, Oxford. No doubt it was in the exercise of what it deemed to be its duties as the trustees of a charity that it thought it was incumbent upon it to accept a collision, and to resist to the point of endangering the public peace the demand of the tenant-farmers for an abatement of tithe. Another body that took the same course was a more important body—the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. They also determined to resist at all cost and risk, and the result was that certain collisions took place. After all, those collisions led to nothing more serious than a popular demonstration of Welsh discontent and dissatisfaction. It was a significant feature of this Welsh demonstration that the bodies which brought about the collision were those who applied the tithes to purposes most thoroughly alien to the sympathies and interests of the Welsh people Personally, I do not see how tithes are to be maintained either in Wales or England unless their application meets with the approval of the people. But, assuming public opinion in England to be favourable to the present use of tithe, I ask the House in this matter to treat Wales as a country for the Welsh, as a public by itself; and, considering the application of tithes in Wales, there is undoubtedly a very strong resentment and antipathy on the part of the Welsh against their application for such purposes as the support of Christ Church, or for the purposes to which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners put them. No doubt there have been disturbances in Wales; but upon that point I do not think the House has been adequately informed. I think the Government honestly believed that there is a danger of disturbance in Wales. But if they could now be satisfied that that danger does not exist, their anxiety to settle the question by some alteration in the machinery for the collection of tithe would be abated. What were the disturbances? Any candid reader of the Report of Mr. Bridge, the Commissioner appointed by the Government themselves, would come to the conclusion that these disturbances would never have occurred if it had not been for the somewhat intemperate zeal with which the authorities first concerned displayed military force in the face of the Welsh people, who are most sensitive about the use of soldiery in civil affairs. In the gravest case the collision was brought about in consequence of masses of men being forced down a hill by a mere accident. Mr. Bridge was sent down by the Home Office in the expectation that his Report would justify the taking of strong measures against the Welsh tithe agitation; but, on the contrary, the Reports of that gentleman have really deprived the Government of all justification for taking further steps in the matter. Mr. Bridge asked the Government to institute no new prosecutions in regard to the disturbances into which he inquired. A considerable time has elapsed since the disturbances first occurred, and the peaceful process of agitation against the collection of tithe without abatement has continued. In

my own county there have been most effective popular demonstrations of the disapproval of the Welsh people against the present use of tithe and of their objection to pay it unless under actual compulsion. Those demonstrations have been entirely within the law; there has been no occasion to interfere with them; and they have led to no serious inconvenience whatever. I believe that that has been due to the reversal of the unwise policy of the local authorities, and to the extremely prudent military chief constable of excellent civilian ideas, Major Godfrey, who has highly distinguished himself in this matter by the great tact and discretion he has shown. Major Godfrey made it his duty to see, personally, all the persons who were to be distrained upon for non-payment of tithe, and on receiving adequate assurances from them, he, on his part, promised that not a single police constable should appear on the scene when the distress was levied. By the adoption of this prudent and proper treatment of the case no breach of the peace has occurred, and in the county of Montgomery, at any rate, no inconvenience or loss has been sustained. No doubt the course pursued by Major Godfrey met with the disapproval of some of the local clergy, but Major Godfrey has been amply justified by the Conservative Quarter Sessions, and the first person to justify him was the Conservative Lord Lieutenant of the county. I will therefore ask the House to consider whether the practical outcome of the agitation in Wales, as it has now come to light through the examination invited by the Government itself at the hands of Mr. Bridge, and as it has been tested by subsequent events, presents any case such as the Government last Session supposed to exist for legislation of this kind. I believe I shall be supported by the great majority of the Welsh Members when I say that there really is no need for these Bills whatever so far as Wales is concerned. There is a disposition in some quarters to speak of tithe as if it were property, not only of the ordinary kind, but of a specially inviolable and sacred character. Persons who speak in this manner have not taken much trouble to investigate the history of tithe. Among those who appear to be the strongest supporters of tithe will be found those great landowners and pillars of the Church, who depend very largely on Church lands in which tithes have been long ago merged by an act of spoliation and robbery inexcusable and discreditable, which turned public property into private property. The agitation in Wales to a large extent accounts for the existence in the Queen's Speech of the proposal to carry these Bills. But it is in Wales itself that the case of tithe is most indefensible and most dangerous to touch. There is a certain popular assent and sympathy with the use of tithes in England which protects the property and influences our ideas in dealing with it. In Wales that sympathy is entirely the other way, although Wales has been remarkable always for its love of religion, and has no ill-will for the Church as a Church. Wales has a more glorious episode in its history than, perhaps, any other part of the Queen's dominions in relation to its culture of religion. Wales, at a time when Christianity was almost extinct in the country, reconquered and revived it, and that was the act of the humblest of its people, and done in the face of opposition sometimes almost malignant. Having renewed religion in the hearts of the people, the appliances of religion have been completely and adequately supplied from the same humble and popular sources, and there is no part of Her Majesty's dominions where religious appliances are now so adequate to the wants of the people as in Wales. You have in Wales the voluntary system triumphant, adequate, and in actual possession, and in that respect tithes are not in the faintest degree essential to the maintenance of religion. Then, what is the use of tithes? A contrary view, I know, is suggested by many high authorities, and especially those friendly to the English Establishment. It is said that that the Welsh clergy are very poor. If that is so, whose is the fault, and where does the blame lie?—because, after all, almost all the land and the great bulk of the wealth of Wales is in the Church hands; and that the clergy of the rich should be poor while the humble people have so completely supplied their own religious needs can only be described as a deep and lasting dis-

credit to the upper and Anglicizing classes of the Principality. There is another reason why the Welsh clergy are poor, and one that I think too often escapes observation, and that is that the Welsh clergy are a great deal too numerous. The numbers are very easily ascertained. Anyone who refers to "Whittaker's Almanack" can discover them. "Whittaker" is an impartial authority, and though it can only give an estimate of the Church population of England and Wales, I believe its estimate will be pretty generally accepted. It is 13,500,000. "Whittaker" does not give the number of beneficed clergy and curates apart from the unattached clergy, but the totals in 1887 were, in fact, in England alone 12,804 beneficed clergy and 1,275 curates. If I were to deduct half-a-million from the 13,500,000 Church people of England and Wales and ascribe 500,000 to Wales, I should be, I think, treated by the Nonconformists of Wales as making an excessive deduction, and attributing to the Principality a proportion greatly beyond its true Church population. But if, in order to avoid all doubt and criticism, we take half-a-million as the amount of Church population in Wales, then this is the result—there is in England one clergyman for every 700 souls; but in Wales as there are 988 beneficed clergy and 500 curates, leaving out the clergy unattached, you have one clergyman for every 336 souls. Therefore, there are more than twice as many clergy in Wales in proportion to Church population as in England, and we know that if we take the case of bishops, deans, canons, and chapters, the proportion will be even greater. I think this excess will be admitted undue when it is considered that on all hands it is agreed that the Protestant clergy in Ireland was largely in excess of the requirements of Ireland—["No!"]—well, I certainly have always thought that that was an accepted dictum. We have now the exact Church population of Ireland—namely, 702,000, and the beneficed clergy and curates there number 1,615. Therefore, the case of Ireland is that there is one clergyman to every 434 of the Church population, and so Wales with its one to 336 clearly superabounds in clergy. I should not have brought forward this case of excess if it had been merely to explain why the clergy may be poorly paid out of endowments in the absence of assistance from their wealthy friends; but I bring it forward as it has a close bearing upon the question of the time when this legislation is proposed. The overabounding number of clergymen in proportion to the Church population has this practical effect in Wales under existing conditions—that it renders the Establishment in Wales a distinctly aggressive and propagandist body, and the least you could do would be to leave it alone. What, however, is taking place is this—that immense subsidies are being poured into Wales from the Establishment in England, for the distinct purpose of assisting the English Establishment in Wales, as being the weak point of the Establishment generally—and as being an integral portion of it—and with the view of maintaining the solidarity of the Establishment. That, I maintain, is a state of things which is not in the interest of religion. It is not at all a question of piety or anything else, but simply of defence of the principle of Establishment. Wales is being made to suffer in the interests of a powerful body comparatively outside, and with which Wales has no real or heartfelt concern—namely, the English Establishment. I know it is said that the Church in Wales is making progress. Well, if new churches, new benefices, and incumbents, are regarded as progress, without reference to whether congregations exist for them or not, no doubt that position might be sustained. We, who are making our voices heard in Parliament and elsewhere against the existing state of things, are told that we are simply expressing our alarm at the progress the Church is making in Wales; but we are not to be deterred by such accusations from setting forth the true facts of the case. By a majority of more than five-sixths of the Welsh Representatives, we declare to you that you are simply doing mischief in the Principality, aggravating the situation, and making a final solution not only more difficult in itself, but more mischievous in its eventual effect on the Establishment. I think the situation in Wales may be summed up in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham, whom the whole House now agrees in reverencing.

Mr. Bright said of the Establishment in Wales that it was Establishment that killed the Church. I believe that all Welsh Representatives will agree in telling the House that if it wants to revive the Church in Wales, the only way to do it is for the Church to kill the Establishment. In Wales there is no ill-will to the Church as a Church, but there is a most deeply-rooted determination to get rid of the Establishment. As to the attempt to revive it by doing what the Ecclesiastical Commissioners are doing — namely, by importing £45,000 a year of English tithes into Wales for the purpose of bolstering it up, I say that is a thing which the farming classes, whether in England or in Wales, will not long continue to endure. The position of the new missionary clergyman of the Established Church in Wales is too often a curse to himself and mischievous to the Church and to religion. He is set down in remote recesses of the Welsh hills, without congregation or friends, utterly isolated and unoccupied. He is beyond the reach of episcopal observation and control, and he too often creates scandals, which we do not wish to bring before the House, but which, believe me— and I know that my Colleagues from Wales will confirm me in this — are convincing the immense majority of the people that the state of things existing at present must be put an end to speedily so far as State aid and national resources are concerned in creating and supporting it. With reference to this great question of disestablishment as bearing upon tithes, I do not believe myself that Wales wishes to proceed to disestablishment by way of disendowment. I believe that Wales wishes to proceed to disendowment by way of disestablishment. We want fairly to bring before the country the propriety of making the Church in Wales voluntary, and of leaving all religions on an equal footing. We do not want to starve the Church out by artificial means, but we feel that if any Administration, particularly the present one, with a majority made up in such a way that it can hardly command the respect of the country, were to snatch a measure of the kind referred to in the Queen's Speech from the House, and endeavour to drive underground the present honest and open and lawful development of opinion in Wales, some great mischief will ensue. What we say is that the Tithe Bill of the Government is an uncalled-for challenge to Wales. It is a challenge to us and a commencement of hostilities if you determine to reinforce the Church, as you believe, by an alteration of the machinery of the law, and we warn you that we believe you are making a great error. I daresay you may not regard our opposition as a very formidable one, and that you may, perhaps, give but little weight to the grounds on which we offer it; nevertheless, I believe that Welsh Members will not be deterred from stating their views plainly on the subject. We say we do not believe it to be to the interests of the Church itself to alter the process by which tithe is recovered; and I venture to give another reason for not doing it, and it is this: at present the mischief of the position of the clergyman in Wales is that he is, more than ever was the case in England, the enforced ally of the landlord. He appears, unhappily, to be in confederacy with the landlord against the mass of the people, and therefore, if you take the course of making the landlord the medium for the payment of the stipend of the clergyman, you will more than ever cement that alliance; you will turn the clergyman into the mere chaplain of the landlord; you will greatly aggravate the mischief which is too rife already in Wales, and will go far to embroil the question of the land with the question of the Establishment. I believe that at present the larger body of landowners in Wales are on good terms with their tenants. The tenants, no doubt, have great grievances, and much might be done by legislation for them; but I believe that on the whole there is a great deal of excellent feeling remaining in Wales between landlord and tenant, for, after, all, the Welsh people have a more natural disposition to hang together in spite of all differences, than prevails in many parts of England itself. But if we throw on the landlord the whole of the odium connected with the support of the clergyman, we shall transform the agitation which is now taking place between the tithe-owner and the tithe-payer to some extent into an agitation between the landlord and the tenant, and it will take the form of an objection to rent. I think, therefore,

that the Government would do well to reconsider the necessity and advisability of introducing legislation on the subject of tithes, and, above all, I think they should not introduce it in the form of a challenge to a Welsh party which is bound to make itself heard. Instead of announcing in the Queen's Speech this unhappy question of tithes, the Government would have done better to give Wales that measure of intermediate education which we all on both sides agree in desiring, and which is so ripe for settlement.

*Mr. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): I wish to say a few words on a question which has just been mentioned by the last speaker—namely, that of Intermediate Education. It really is a very strong measure on the part of the Government, after repeated promises to deal with Intermediate Education, to declare to the country that they have not even the intention of considering it this Session. There is no part of the Queen's dominions where a measure as to Intermediate Education is more needed and more desired than in Wales. Young Welshmen are frequently heard to speak of themselves as thirsting for that education. No doubt, to a certain extent, they have a good elementary education, and they have made use of it under difficulties which would have discouraged any nation less devoted to education than themselves. The Welsh colleges have attained a marked success, but there is a great and urgent want for Intermediate Education, for which, as I say, young men in Wales are thirsting —a greater want than is felt either in England or in Scotland. At present the colleges have, to a great extent, to do the work of Intermediate Education, and it is certainly not right that that should be the case. You are bound to qualify young men in a poor country like Wales for finding occupation elsewhere which they cannot find at home, and to fit them to obtain occupation elsewhere. The Welsh quarrymen are one of the most intelligent classes of men it is possible to find anywhere, and they have shown their devotion to education by the immense sacrifices they have made. In one district they raised £1,500 for the colleges, and established scholarships for their children out of their wages, and now, at the present moment, Wales is setting an example to every part of the country by its readiness to avail itself of the opportunities for agricultural training afforded it, and to develop the agriculture of the Principality. Really, is it not a pity to allow a whole generation of young men to grow up without those advantages we have so repeatedly promised them, and which they are so ready to avail themselves of? Fortunately this is not a Party question. You have on both sides of the House promised to bring in these Intermediate Education Bills. You have Conservatives professing to be as ready and anxious to forward this question as the Liberal Party, and surely it is a confession of impotence on the part of the Government and of Parliament to neglect their promises. I put the thing as a practical question. You have two ways of dealing with it even in view of the pressure of business in the House. Why should not the Conservative and Liberal Bills on this subject be sent to a Committee upstairs for consideration? The Government would, of course, have a majority there; but still from such a Committee we might get the best Bill we could hope to gain in a Conservative Parliament, and, although it might not give us all we want, it would be of immense benefit to a generation of young men who are growing up without those advantages which ought to be put within their reach. It would be better still if the Government would bring in such a Bill and send it to a Grand Committee, because the experience we have had of Grand Committees has been most satisfactory. Not only do they get through their business more rapidly than in Committee of the Whole House, but anyone who has sat on a Grand Committee knows that they do their business on any Bill sent to them thoroughly and well. Instead of having a lot of Members running in and out of the House, and not giving attention to the matter in hand, these Committees sit from hour to hour, and the consequence is that the Bills passed by these Committees have been generally accepted by the House, and have been very superior to the common legislation that passes through this House. It does seem to me that if the Conservative Government wish to distinguish

themselves as legislators on non-contentious matters, they ought to use this system of Grand Committees, which they have tried and admitted to be beneficial, more than they have yet done. In regard to Scotch, and perhaps, still more, Welsh questions, Bills are promised year after year, and it is a disgrace that such a practice should continue. Send them to the Grand Committees up stairs, and have them thoroughly well considered, and in that way you would get through a great amount of really beneficial legislation, and which would be a credit to us. It is a real discredit to us that one side or the other of the House should year after year promise legislation, and that the country should see us impotent to carry out that which it is our duty to accomplish. I hope the Government will take this question into their consideration, and allow Welsh Members and private Members on both sides of the House to carry out their Bills by means of one of these Grand Committees, and so give that assistance to intermediate education in Wales which is so important to us.

*MR. PRITCHARD-MORGAN (Merthyr Tydvil): We have heard some facts, Sir, with reference to the Principality of Wales, but there is a total absence of any mention of that Principality in the gracious Address from the Throne. Possibly it may be accounted for by the fact that there are so many Members of the House who sit on this side as the Representatives of the most important portions of Wales. Reference is made to our relations with other Powers, but I suggest that our relations with the Colonies are not equally satisfactory. Our relations with the Colonies are to my mind of the most strained character. The action of the Government with reference to the appointment of Mr. Blake, to my mind, showed great weakness. Colonists at the present moment, instead of referring to the "Mother Country," speak of the "Mother-in-law" Country. They simply look upon this country as exercising some little legal supervision without having their real welfare at heart. We have in the Address reference to what has been done for Ireland, and what is going to be done for Scotland, and I think, to say the least of it, that something should be done for that portion of the United Kingdom (Wales), which hitherto has proved itself so loyal, and has not made any complaint whatever. The Irish have properly complained of their treatment at the hands of the Government, and they have received, at any rate, some reparation and consideration. I think the people of Wales should receive some consideration also. The question of equality of religion, of the land laws, and of mining laws, are subjects which materially affect the Principality. I do not wish to speak in respect of any particular matter, but I do say that, inasmuch as, according to Her Majesty's most gracious Speech, we are to have a Board or a Minister for Agriculture, we should have a Minister to look after the mining industries of the country, more especially as those mining industries are retarded, notably in the Principality. The question of royalties is a most grievous one to thousands upon thousands of the people. Various promises have been made by the Government with regard to the subject, but there is not one word about it in the Address, nor do we hear of any proposed legislation upon royalties. So far as the Principality is concerned, endeavours to confer benefit on the general community are retarded by the present Government in every possible and conceivable way. We have carried on our industries there up to the present moment without even police protection. We have to pay for our own police, and we have to pay for our own postal communications. And although I know that offers were made to the Post Office for the payment of £90 a-year under contract to establish a postal communication for the industry to which I refer, yet no consideration has been given to it. I do not think that is the way to encourage industries, more especially when the Government at the same time insists upon their running all the risk, and upon the payment for police protection and postal communication out of the pockets of private individuals. If people are prepared to expend money in the employment of labour, I should think they ought to be encouraged in every possible and conceivable way. Whether they obtain any return for this outlay is a matter for themselves, and not for anyone else; but at any rate the country would necessarily derive benfit from the employment of labour, and by the consequent prevention of

poverty and distress, especially in the Principality of Wales.

*MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): If the omission of all mention of Wales from the gracious Speech from the Throne were the result of the unusual pressure of public business on the attention of the Government, or were there any explanation at all which could justify it, I should have been well content to have been silent. But, from what I have observed of the conduct of the Government and their supporters on Welsh questions, I fear it is only another attempt on their part to carry out the policy of ignoring Welsh nationality, and of denying the reality of Welsh grievances. In two Sessions, when application was made to them to set apart an evening for the discussion of the Motion of the hon. Member for Swansea, in respect of a question of such absorbing interest to the Welsh people as the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church, they declined on each occasion, and I fear our endeavour on the present occasion will be equally ineffective as previous protests. What we must thoroughly impress upon the Government is that they cannot ignore the existence of a reality by simply closing their eyes or averting their gaze. Yet that is the attitude they seem to have adopted in reference to any attempt to discuss the grievances of Wales. On one occasion, when we succeeded in getting a small discussion on Welsh affairs, by far the greater number of hon. Members opposite left the House. I have myself observed their conduct on more than one occasion, and I took the opportunity to remark that such indifference was not likely to lead to a belief in the House, as the central body, being better qualified to understand the legislative wants of the various portions of the United Kingdom than those particular portions of the Kingdom themselves. I earnestly hope that no Government, be it Liberal or Conservative, will continue to turn from Welsh questions without them giving a hearing. The Wales of the imagination of the Government and of the great bulk of their supporters is entirely different from the Wales known to those who are best acquainted with the Principality. Now, the Under Secretary for India, in his speech, made the observation that that part of the country was particularly happy which received no mention in the Queen's Speech.

*SIR JOHN GORST: I said that province of the Empire which did not require to be mentioned in Her Majesty's Speech.

*MR. BOWEN ROWLANDS: That is simply to substitute the devoted term Empire for country; but I accept the correction, though it does not seem to me to alter the extraordinary statement that that portion of the Empire may be considered peculiarly fortunate of which no mention is made in the Speech from the Throne. I venture to think that an altogether inaccurate statement. It might be true of a country which had not been under discussion, where troubles had not arisen, and where opposing interests had not come into collision; but it is monstrous to imply the prosperity of a country where all these conditions exist because it is omitted from the Queen's Speech. The picture of Wales which Her Majesty's Government and its supporters desire to create is one which does not represent the real lineaments and features of that country. Their action may be likened to that of the father of the Great Frederick of Prussia, who painted pictures of his tall soldiers, and who, when the pictures were not like the soldiers, painted the soldiers to be like the pictures. The conduct of the Government with regard to Wales is very much like that. They paint for us a picture of that Principality, and offer us a representation created out of their own imagination, but which is in reality no likeness at all. I do not propose to go into the question of tithes, nor the other question of education; but I cannot help saying I find no justification whatever for the omission of Wales from the Queen's Speech. We find Scotland there and Ireland too, and although the grievances of Ireland have reached a more acute stage than those of Wales, I do not believe that because the area is larger they are any more real than those experienced by the Welsh population. I would say to Her Majesty's Government—"If you wish to prevent the grievances of Wales from assuming the dangerous proportions presented by those from which the people of other

parts of the Kingdom are suffering, you will deal with them promptly and endeavour to remedy them by removing the causes." I hope this will prove the last occasion on which Wales will be omitted from the Queen's Speech in this way. I also trust it will not be said that this omission is an indication of the prosperity and happiness of the Welsh people, nor of the desire of the Government to do them justice. I hope, moreover, Her Majesty's Government will desist from legislating in the only direction in regard to Wales in which it is intended to proceed—I allude to the dangerous legislation which is threatened with regard to tithes; but that they will address themselves to the removal of those grievances under which the Welsh people have so long laboured and which they have so patiently borne.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wiltshire, Chippenham): I trust that in the course of the present Session something may be done to remedy the system under which, in this House, the rights of private Members are totally ignored, so that nothing in the shape of an unofficial programme has even the ghost of a chance of being passed, while all Bills brought forward by private individuals are almost invariably snuffed out by the blocking arrangement. Turning to another matter, I would point out that we are asked in the Queen's Speech to vote a large sum of money "for the safety of our shores and our commerce;" but I do not see how it is possible for us to be in a position to do this until justice is done to our population. It is impossible to close our eyes to the social condition of this country when we know that it contains nearly a million of paupers. This evil is largely produced by the immigration of foreign paupers; and among the evils which result from the increased number of persons thus thrown into the labour market, I may mention what is called the "sweating system," under which, owing to the congested state of the labour market, the working population are compelled to accept starvation wages, and in some cases have to work six-and-thirty hours out of the forty-eight in the struggle for an existence, which is merely one of physical emaciation. Under the Act passed last year, the County Councils, thereby created, are enabled to appropriate certain sums for the purpose of emigrating our own people, whom we can least spare—while, on the other hand, we are receiving the surplus paupers of other countries. The question is, why do not we put a stop to this sort of immigration as other nations do? The authorities of France, Germany, and other Continental countries send our paupers back again, and I do not see what harm there could be in our taking a similar course with the paupers sent here from abroad; because charity begins at home, and our neighbours cannot object to our doing as they do. I cannot help thinking there is a great deal of cant in the way in which some questions are dealt with, as compared with the treatment bestowed on others. We tolerate all the evils that are inflicted on our own population by impure literature, which is flooding the country, and at the same time work ourselves into a state of great excitement over the poor children who, by being employed in the theatrical pantomimes, assist in the necessary work of maintaining the families to which they belong. This reminds me of what was said by Dr. Johnson in *The Rambler*. Speaking of cant, he said he was reminded very much of the gentleman who on coming down to breakfast, and reading in the papers that half Asia Minor had been submerged, became quite broken-hearted, but who when, a couple of minutes afterwards, he found his eggs were hard boiled, flew into a towering passion. With regard to another matter, namely, the question of over-crowding, it should be remembered that this is not always the result of over-population or improvident marriages, but frequently arises from the fact that our workmen like to reside as near as possible to the work they have to do. If a workman cannot live near his family he is not only isolated, but is put to the expense of maintaining two homes, which cannot be at all satisfactory. The working classes in the Metropolis have a right to complain that they have been duped in regard to the promises held out to them of better dwellings, which were to occupy the prison sites, and which Lord Cross referred to as a "windfall" and a "Godsend." The Bill of 1885, which was brought forward to fulfil the expectancies of the working class, was killed by vested interests. The present Secretary for Ireland, when President

of the Local Government Board, said, in speaking of the Bill, "London was the place where most injury had been done to the working classes by displacements, carried out under the Acts of Parliament, and London was also the one town in the United Kingdom where the greatest injury had been done to the working classes by compelling them to migrate. There was, therefore, nothing unfair in undoing the wrong Parliament had itself inflicted." The late Emperor Frederick, when upon his death-bed, said, "Learn to suffer without complaining;" and I say that the working classes have done this. But what does Archdeacon Farrar say upon this subject? He says: "Owing, either to inefficient powers, or the neglect of the appointed authorities, or to the absence of proper superintendence, I have found myself defeated year by year in the effort to force the landlords of foul and rotting tenements to do their duty. I shall rejoice if the County Council rides roughshod over the greed and villany of men who care only to get money out of the abodes of misery and vice. The only way in which it is possible to save the inhabitants of certain slums and rookeries is to break up the degrading localities in which they herd together, and which become mere hotbeds of disease and vice. In better houses, less removed from the eye of the law, they will live healthier and more human lives." And, again, Cardinal Manning writes: "I have no subject more at heart than the intolerable condition of our people crowded in rooms unfit for human habitation. The subject is above and distinct from all politics, and the obligation to promote it lies on both Parties in the State. Since the Royal Commission reported, years have passed and little has been done. I hope this new impulse will give effect to its recommendations and reach beyond them." It should not be forgotten that the East End contributes its quota towards the coal dues, and therefore is entitled to consideration in regard to public works, to a large extent carried out by means of the money it has advanced. I appeal to this House to do what it can in this, the fourth Session of the present Parliament, not to allow Party politics to prejudice the settlement of this question, and, furthermore, to do its utmost to benefit those who are poorer than ourselves.

Lord Henry Bruce

IMPRISONMENT OF A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE.—QUESTIONS.

MR. C. S. PARNELL (Cork): I wish, Sir, to interpose for a few minutes in this debate to bring a matter of very considerable and pressing importance under the attention of the head of the Government. I regret that the Chief Secretary is not in his place. I do not attach any blame to the right hon. Gentleman, and I regret I have not been able to give him sufficient notice to enable him to be in his place; but this is a matter which will not brook delay, and I therefore feel myself bound to proceed with it in his absence in the hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will take such notice of the matter as will remove the trouble. I have just received, Sir, a telegram—or rather one of my hon. Friends has just received a telegram from the Mayor of Kilkenny in the following terms:—"After Mr. Carew's arrival at Kilkenny Prison last night he was forcibly deprived of his clothes, even of his flannel shirt. His hair and moustache were cut off. He is all day lying on a plank bed. He refuses to wear the prison garments." I have also received a telegram from the Lord Mayor of Dublin to the same effect. Now, Sir, opinions may differ, and rightly differ, as to the course pursued by some Members of this House, and others who have decided to resist the wearing of prison clothes as a question of principle; but you are face to face with the fact that they have refused; and it comes to this—do the Irish Executive intend to enforce this rule at the risk of the health, and possibly of the lives, of the prisoners in gaol? This question of clothes is an old question in the treatment of Irish political prisoners, and I would refer the House to the treatment of the treason-felony prisoners in 1865, and following years, which was inquired into by the Devon Commission of 1871. The clothes of those prisoners were taken from them in the depth of winter, and they were even deprived of their flannels. Some of them contracted maladies which subsequently brought them to their graves. This is the paragraph in which the Devon Commission

refer to the matter (Vol. 53, page 12). "We are of opinion that as they (the prisoners) arrived at the prison in mid winter, and as some of them appear to have been men of delicate constitution, and one was deformed and of weakly frame, flannels should have been given to them without waiting for the intervention of the medical officer." Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has explained on a former occasion that if any prisoner who is able to plead a weak heart or delicate lungs refuses to attire himself in the prescribed dress, force will not be applied to him. But the right hon. Gentleman knows very well that he has put it out of the power of any prisoner to plead a weak heart or delicate lungs, however weak his heart or delicate his lungs may be; and I say it is for the right hon. Gentleman, when he is dealing with such notorious facts as I have brought before him, to take his precautions and to give his orders before, so that he may be sure that what is practically murder may not take place. The public opinion of this country was horrified by the accounts of the scenes which took place in the prison where Mr. W. O'Brien was recently confined. Mr. O'Brien had the good fortune to be a man in a prominent position, and he was not permitted to suffer beyond a limited space, and the right hon. Gentleman was compelled to intervene in behalf of that distinguished prisoner. But what is to become of the obscurer men? Are they to be left naked for days and weeks in the winter, deprived of the flannels that they are accustomed to wear? The right hon. Gentleman said he was going to draw no distinction between one prisoner and another, but a distinction has been drawn in Mr. Carew's case. Mr. Carew is not a prominent Member of this House; he has not spoken often, and, I suppose, the prison officials therefore think it safe to make this attack on him. As it is, great mischief may have been done in his case. Even now Mr. Carew may be lying in his cell without, perhaps, even bedclothes to cover him. We do not know what the history of Mr. Carew has been since these telegrams were despatched. I have brought forward this matter, and I ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider how far he is going to press this rigid adherence to red tape in prison rules. Is he going to insist that Mr. Carew shall remain in his present position? Is the right hon. Gentleman going to leave Mr. Carew stripped, without even his flannel shirt? If he determines to go on with his policy —I do not wish to use hasty words, I do not wish to use passionate words, words any of us may hereafter regret, but with this warning before him, and with the knowledge of what happened in the case of Mr. Mandeville, and what may happen in other cases, if he persists in this course of rigid adherence to the law which he himself has been mainly instrumental in passing, and under which no distinction is made in the treatment of political prisoners and the treatment of ordinary prisoners—all I can say is that I believe that the judgment of this country hereafter will not hold the right hon. Gentleman guiltless of the consequences that may result.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have only been in this building for about three minutes, and was not fortunate enough to arrive in time to hear the opening words of the hon. Gentleman's speech; but I understand that he had read to the House a telegram from the Mayor of Kilkenny to the effect that the Member for North Kildare had arrived in Kilkenny prison last night, had been forcibly deprived of his clothes and flannel shirt, and had been lying all the day long on a plank bed, refusing to wear the prison garb. No, Sir, I have no knowledge of the facts enumerated in this telegram. I have received other telegrams from other Mayors which in no sense were accurate, and it is extremely possible that this telegram from this Mayor might be as inaccurate as the telegrams of other Mayors have been. But on the broad question, if the hon. Gentleman asks me, I can return him a perfectly distinct, clear, and explicit reply. Every man, so far as I am concerned, imprisoned in Ireland under the law obtaining in Ireland should be treated as an ordinary prisoner. The rules regulating the treatment of ordinary prisoners are well known, and are to be found by any gentleman who searches for them. Any relaxation of these rules must be made, in my opinion, upon the authority of the Medical Officer of the prison. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down says, in his opinion, that

the Member for North Kildare is likely to suffer in health for a misfortune which at this moment he is bringing upon himself by refusing to put on prison clothes, which are provided for him according to the prison rules. To say that a man is kept naked in his cell because, being provided with adequate clothing, he refused to put it on, is a gross misuse of the English language. Such a man ought not to be described as a man deprived of his clothing. He is a man who deprives himself of his clothing, and it is as a man who deprives himself of his clothing that he ought to be judged. If, however, this peculiar mania reaches a point which injures his health, it is the business of the prison doctor to make such relaxations in the rules as he may think will adequately preserve the health of the prisoner. Any recommendation of the doctor of that kind is, of course, instantly attended to, and I have not the slightest doubt that in the case of the Member for North Kildare, like every other prisoner, be he Member of Parliament or not Member of Parliament, committed under this Act or that Act—I have not the slightest doubt that the doctor of the prison at Kilkenny will do his duty by Mr. Carew, and if his health be suffering that he will take such steps as are necessary to preserve it. The hon. Gentleman says that a phrase in a letter which I wrote about 14 months ago, on the subject of the first imprisonment of the Member for North-East Cork, was couched in such terms that no prisoner under the Crimes Act could again plead ill-health or any bodily defect as a ground for receiving special relaxations of the rules. The House and the hon. Member and the hon. Gentlemen who sit beside him will perhaps be surprised to learn that at this moment I have obtained statistics of the relaxations given in Irish prisons to all classes of prisoners, and I find that the relaxations of prison rules given under medical authority to Crimes Act prisoners are enormously in excess of the relaxations of the rules given to any other class of prisoners. In fact, the doctors of the Irish prisons have given more relaxations of prison discipline to prisoners under the Crimes Act than to any other class of prisoners. Now there are only three conclusions to be drawn from that fact, and you must choose one of the three. Either the prison doctors in Ireland have been intimidated—

MR. J. G. S. MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): By whom?

MR. BALFOUR: By methods perfectly familiar to hon. Gentlemen opposite and their Friends—that is a question on which I shall have more to say on another occasion—or else Crimes Act prisoners are in the habit of malingering, or else there is some connection between physical weakness and Irish Nationalism. I will defy human ingenuity to come to any further alternative. The proportion of medical relaxation in the case of Crimes Act prisoners is enormously in excess, and has been for the last 12 months, of the relaxation given in the case of other prisoners, and what bearing has that upon the statement of the hon. Gentleman? So far from the prisoners under the Act feeling themselves prevented from taking any advantage of the relaxation of the prison rules on account of ill-health, they have taken more advantage of them than any other class of prisoners. So much for the contention of the hon. Member. The hon. Member has stated that the country has been horrified at the accounts given of the sufferings of the hon. Member for East Cork in prison. It is possible that some persons in the country have been horrified at some accounts which have been given of them, but unfortunately all those accounts have not only been inaccurate, but they have been grossly and scandalously mendacious. The sufferings on which hon. Gentlemen have dilated have been purely and absolutely imaginary. There have been sufferings of many persons in Ireland which might, indeed, have horrified the country, but I will undertake to say that anyone really acquainted with what went on in Clonmel Gaol in connection with the hon. Member for North-East Cork would be absolutely incapable of being horrified even in the smallest degree; and probably if he took into account the whole circumstances of the case—second-class carriage and all the rest of it—he would probably consider many of the incidents more calculated to excite smiles than tears. But in any case I can assure the House and the country that the medical precautions taken in Ireland at this moment exceed, I believe, the medical

precautions taken either in Ireland, England, or Scotland at any period with regard to any class of prisoners whatever. I do not, of course, pretend that there is anything in an Irish prison which secures immunity from disease, but I do assert positively that if medical care can prevent any prisoner from suffering from his imprisonment, those medical precautions are now taken in Ireland. But I distinctly repeat the principle I have before laid down, that I will not, so long as I am Irish Secretary, admit that any man has earned special privileges in an Irish prison because he has been engaged in what I think the shocking crimes for which Members of this House and others have been imprisoned under the Crimes Act. I do not suppose the House will expect me to follow the example of the hon. Member for Cork, and unnecessarily to violate the understanding which was come to, that the question of Ireland should be reserved for the debate next week; but, however that may be, if it is any consolation to the hon. Gentleman, I absolutely adhere to the principle I have laid down. So far as I can, so far as I have any influence in the matter, and so long as I can have control over the question, I will not draw a distinction in practice which I believe has no justification, either in law or in morality, between a man who shoots a land-grabber or the man who engages in a conspiracy to make the life of a man who takes an evicted farm absolutely miserable to himself, or, on the other hand, the man who deliberately makes speeches having distinct reference to taking an evicted farm in the neighbourhood where he speaks. Such a man is, in my opinion, as responsible for all the crimes that are committed in connection with the agrarian agitation in Ireland as the man who held the pistol which he put to the head of his victim and with which he shoots him.

*SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I will, I hope, in the few words I have to say, follow the example of the hon. Member for Cork, and I certainly shall not follow any other example, and attempt to indulge in sarcasm. I should like first to take up an observation which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland made at the close of his speech, and I take it up as a Member of Parliament speaking for Members of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman said in substance that the man who shot a land-grabber or who boycotted a land-grabber out of his happiness and enjoyment of life is not worse than the man who deliberately makes speeches inciting to those crimes. Whose case are we now considering? Who is the Member of Parliament at this moment who is suffering the very heaviest sentence of any Member of Parliament? It is an hon. Member who has been condemned to six months' hard labour. Has he delivered any speeches inciting to crime? What was his crime as placed before the Court? He was charged—I am speaking of Mr. Edward Harrington—practically on two counts, one of having made a speech inciting persons to join the Plan of Campaign; the other count was that he made this speech to a proclaimed branch of the National League, and having so made it published it in his own newspaper. The Court—two Resident Magistrates—took evidence as to whether he had incited to the Plan of Campaign, and they acquitted him. A brother Member of our House is at this moment in prison for six months, with hard labour, not for having incited to crime, but because, under a recent Act, a new crime was invented which had never been on the Statute Book before—the crime of taking part in the proceedings of an illegal association, which illegal association was so defined as to include the National League. The right hon. Gentleman endeavours to excuse the policy which I will now proceed to condemn on general grounds, by trying to make out that he is acting up to the theory of the old fable, and punishing the trumpeter who is inciting men to deeds of blood. What is the case brought forward by the hon. Member for Cork? A young Member of Parliament, a man most courteous, who belongs to the best style of the young Member of Parliament, arrested in the house of a candidate at a by-election, a man who, three days ago, was one of us, respected by all of us, has now been subjected to indignities which I shall not comment upon out of respect for the credit of the House of Commons, because I am certain that if I did name them they would raise a laugh in certain quarters. The right hon. Gentle-

man thinks this is right ; we think it is wrong. Now, I will take the two arguments that were put forward by the right hon. Gentleman in defence of this proceeding. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman appears to conceive that it is not in his power to interfere.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I do not.

*Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: Then the right hon. Gentleman has altered his mind.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I never touched upon my relations to the Prison Board at all: I never said anything at all about my powers.

*Sir GEORGE TREVELYAN: At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman spoke in a manner that implied that to take any special course of action with regard to men on account of their position, or on account of the nature of their crime, would be an extreme stretch of his authority, the same right hon. Gentleman, with no more reason, has exerted that authority—and I am glad of it—in the case of priests. But the principal argument of the right hon. Gentleman was one which I am very glad to meet on the floor of the House of Commons. It is that we on this side of the House—and I am inclined to think a good many people who do not support us in the country are beginning to feel the same thing—that we on this side of the House are respecters of persons, that we have a great feeling for the educated, the powerful man of official and Parliamentary position, and that we draw a distinction between those men and the great run of persons. This is an attempt to give to an odious tyranny a sort of veneering of popular and Radical sentiment which the great mass of the people are beginning to see through. Our objection is not so much to the punishment of Members of Parliament as Members of Parliament, but because all the Members of Parliament, speaking broadly, who have been sent to gaol under this Act have been sent to gaol for offences which in their nature ought not to be punished by these indignities. We say that about Members of Parliament, and we say it about people who are not Members of Parliament. There was a time in the history of Ireland when serious crime was very rife, and when the Government honestly believed—[Ministerial ironical cheers]—you have not heard yet what I am going to say—and when the Government honestly believed that everybody whom they were punishing were being punished for actual crime. There were certain exceptions, and when those exceptions were brought to the notice of the Government, the Government altered their treatment. The hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy), speaking below the Gangway last Session, put the case in a nutshell. He said, "Under Lord Spencer one Member of Parliament was sent to prison, and that was myself, and I was sent to prison as a first-class misdemeanant." I do not know how many Members of Parliament have been sent to prison lately—I suppose that four or five and twenty have been there or are on their way there. [Irish Members: Twenty-six.] Well, our reason for resenting the manner in which our Colleagues have been punished with indignity for offences for which, if they are offences, the proper punishment is detention without indignity, is summed up in a sentence—I do not know whether I can quote i exactly—which was spoken about the autocratic Government of Lord Eldon and Mr. Pitt at the beginning of this or at the end of the last century. It was: "The gauge of the severity of an arbitrary Government is the amount of humiliation and severity which it inflicts on men of education." And why? Because men of education are specially formidable, and if great indignities and severities are inflicted upon men of education, men whose names come before the world, who have powerful friends, one may have some conception of the indignities and the cruelties which are being inflicted on the humble

and the poor. I very well remember the story of two days in Ireland. Ten or 12 men were taken off at once in a batch and sent to prison for long terms of hard labour for being concerned in a sort of popular expression of disapprobation when Mr. Blunt was taken to prison. On the next day I think as many as 12 men were sent to prison for an average of about a month apiece, for showing anger and emotion on account of their parish priest being arrested and sent to prison. On the same day 24 publicans were charged with having refused to sell drink to policemen who went about to catch the men, and out of the 24, 11 or 14 were sent to prison. There are two days' work in Ireland. These droves of Hottentots went off to prison, every one of them having an Irishman's sensitiveness, an Irishman's patriotism, an Irishman's native delicacy of feeling. We knew nothing of the treatment of these men, who belong to the common people. It is only in such cases as that of Mr. Edward Harrington, and this young man, who was a friend of many of us, and is our friend still, and will be our friend when he is once again among us, that we know anything. All these men, poor and rich, are punished in the manner I have described for faults which partook of the political sufficiently to make a wise Government draw a distinction between them and gaol birds. Does the right hon. Gentleman himself believe that the punishment of hard labour, with all these indignities, is the same when inflicted upon a man like the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), an extremely overworked literary man, or on such a man as the hon. Gentleman whose case we are now discussing, as it is when inflicted upon a real, genuine, hardened, professional criminal? It is not the same to them, it is not the same to a respectable farmer or labourer, who would never have got into prison if he were not a politician. This is, after all, what the Liberal Party have been accustomed to say about other nations. As far as we have ourselves erred against the principle in the past, we were in the wrong, and ought to admit it now. We do admit it, and we admit that a clearer case than that of this young Member of Parliament has never occurred. When the Government with which I was connected was in office, whenever a case of the kind was brought to our notice, and as soon as it was brought to our notice, the treatment was altered. It was not only in the case of Mr. T. Harrington but in others also that the treatment was altered. This case having been brought to the notice of the House of Commons, we ought as clearly as possible to express our opinion that a great mistake has been made in the Government of Ireland, and that that mistake is only increased by the matter which so deeply concerns the feelings of Irishmen being treated with something very like levity.

MR. W. A. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I should not have intervened in this debate if it had not been owing to the exceptional circumstance that only a few days ago I had the distinguished honour of accompanying the latest criminal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on his passage from the north to the south of Scotland, and I had the opportunity of witnessing the manner in which the hon. Member, who is now in prison, was treated, and of comparing it in my own mind with the reception which would have been given to the right hon. Gentleman if he had been in the same place. Four Members of Parliament and the Chief Constable of Perthshire, who, I may remark, was taken away from his daily duties and put on a wholly unnecessary mission, occupied one carriage, the Irish sergeant who had effected the arrest having the

delicacy or good taste to occupy another compartment, leaving us entirely alone. The news of the arrest was flashed by telegraph along the route we took, and at every station through which we passed crowds of people assembled. My hon. Friend, who is now in prison, was received at every place with loud cheers. Why, if the right hon. Gentleman had been there he would have been hooted out of the stations. As a Scotchman, I felt humiliated. I remembered that Scotland was once an independent nation, once proud of its national honour, and I felt humiliated that Scotchmen should have a political refugee, so to speak, dragged from their midst by the right hon. Gentleman's minions. Moreover, I could not help feeling a deep sense of shame that there could be found in Scotland any Justice of the Peace who could so forget the national dignity and national honour as to countersign a *lettre de cachet* of the Chief Secretary's. I am happy to think, however, that the man who countersigned the document, if I may judge by his name, for he is known by the name of Isles, is not a Scotchman. I hope he is not, and I hope there is no Scotchman who would so demean himself as to be guilty of abandoning any person enjoying our hospitality to the tender mercies, or rather cruelties, of the right hon. Gentleman. I cannot help contrasting what is going on in the prison in Ireland with the manner in which the hon. Member was received and treated by the Scotch people, and I say that the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman in trampling upon the national self-respect is outraging the sense of the people of Scotland. If the right hon. Gentleman is determined to enjoy a cynical brutality and cruelty, let him confine himself to Ireland: let him not pollute a country which was honoured by the citizenship of John Knox, and which has hitherto been the habitation of a free and independent people.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Spalding) moved the adjournment of the debate.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cockermouth) gave notice that as the Amendment of which he had given notice could not be moved before the Amendment standing in the name of the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), he would move it at a later stage of the Address.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Halley Stewart,*) put,—and agreed to.

Debate further adjourned till Monday next.

MOTION.

—o—

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—DISTRIBUTION.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in superintending the form and regulating the distribution of Parliamentary Papers. The following Committee was nominated:—Mr. J. M. Maclean, Mr. Howell, Mr. Gill, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Causton, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Arthur Acland, and Sir Herbert Maxwell.

TOWN HOLDINGS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee be reappointed to inquire into the terms of occupation and the compensation for improvements possessed by the occupiers of town houses and holdings in Great Britain and Ireland; and to inquire into the expediency of giving the leaseholders facilities for the purchase of the fee simple of their property, and also into the question of imposing a direct assessment on the owners of ground rents and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations or other improvements.—(Colonel Nolan.)

House adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 3.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 5.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 25th February, 1889.

QUEEN'S SPEECH—HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

THE LORD STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD (The Earl of MOUNT-EDGCUMBE) reported Her Majesty's answer to the Address, as follows:—

"My Lords,

"I thank you sincerely for your loyal and dutiful Address. I received with great satisfaction your assurances that you will bestow your careful consideration on the measures that may be submitted to you, and I trust that such measures may be settled in such a manner as may best conduce to the interests of all my faithful subjects."

THE DUBLIN BARRACKS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

*THE EARL OF BELMORE, in rising to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what steps it is intended to take to improve the sanitary condition of the Barracks of the Dublin garrison, said: My Lords, this question relates to a matter which is admitted to be of very great importance, and even if there were any doubt upon it, I think the fact that Mr. Stanhope has within the last few weeks thought it his duty to go to Dublin and make a careful inspection of the Barracks would show the importance of this matter. My Lords, although I have put the question in general terms with regard to all the Barracks in Dublin, yet the particular Barracks in which most of these cases of enteric fever have occurred are what are known as the Royal Barracks, the large Barracks near Phœnix Park and very near the river. The River Liffey, although it has been long embanked, at one time was not embanked. It was a tidal river with apparently a considerable amount of shore, and in old times the shore was in a very unsatisfactory and unsanitary condition, as may be found by a Resolution of the Irish House of Commons as far back as the reign of King Charles the 2nd, relating to the unsanitary state of Dublin and the shores of the Liffey. The result of this river (being a tidal river) having been unembanked, was that there was a beach upon both sides of the river. That has now been reclaimed, and it is upon that land that the buildings and streets on both sides now stand. It appears from the Report which my noble Friend near me (Earl Beauchamp) moved for last year that a considerable part of the Royal Barracks are built upon what was originally the shore of the river. My Lords, upon looking over the Report which my noble Friend obtained, I find a very concise and, at the same time, a short account of the Barracks and of what the Commissioners, Sir Charles Cameron and Dr. Grimshaw, did in the way of finding out what was the cause of the enteric fever which had so long prevailed at the Barracks. Before going into that I may say that on comparing the figures I find that between the year 1879 and the year before last (the year down to which the Report goes) there were no less than 65 cases of enteric fever, and of those 65 cases no fewer than 59 arose in the Royal Barracks. Some of those cases were fatal, although, in the majority of them, those who suffered appear to have recovered. Those 59 cases included

officers and soldiers, and I think seven female members of the families of either officers or soldiers. My Lords, with regard to the Barracks themselves, they appear to have been built a considerable time ago, although it is not stated when. They consist of a number of squares facing the river. There is a considerable space between them and the river, and as far as I can judge from the map, although I do not remember it from my personal recollection, there is a road running at the front of the Barracks, so that the Barracks themselves are not actually upon the river, and I do not think the river itself can be answerable for the illness that has occurred at these Barracks. Above the Barracks, upon a higher level, is the Arbour Hill Hospital and military prison, and it appears that there are running through the Barrack premises, although to a very slight extent under the Barracks, four sewers or drains, and one of those drains appears to run through the west side of the Barrack premises close to the building, and in that part of the Barracks where it is supposed that most of the cases have occurred, although it appears by the Report that cases did occur sometimes over the whole of the Barracks. As regards the site of the Barracks themselves, I confess that before I looked at this Report I expected to have found that the soil was probably saturated with sewage, as is, I am afraid, very often the case with the houses in Dublin. I find, however, that this is not the case. There are, no doubt, some old drains running through the premises, but those drains have been now pronounced to be perfectly innocuous, and therefore the cause of the infection must be sought elsewhere. There appear, I think, to have been two causes which presented themselves to the minds of the gentleman who made this Report as possible causes of the infection. One is that certain latrines were out of order. They first of all made a preliminary Report, and before they finished their official investigation these had been put in order. But they also found that there were certain ventilators of the sewers, one of which, at any rate, they thought would be a source of danger. They applied the smoke test to one of these ventilators, and they found that when the wind set in a particular direction, whatever sewer gas came out of this ventilator would, in point of fact, go straight into the Barracks. Another matter to which they called attention as a possible source of infection was the milk supply to the men in the Barracks. The milk in Dublin is supplied in winter from cows milked in the dairy yards. These yards are supplied with water which is quite safe. But in the summer time the cows are milked out in the fields, where they drink water which is impure, and Sir Charles Cameron and Dr. Grimshaw seem to think that that is a likely cause of infection. My Lords, I am not going to trouble your Lordships with going over other barracks, but there are two other places in Dublin, besides the Royal Barracks, which I may just refer to. Although it does not appear upon the Report, I understand that the guard-room at the Castle has been found to be in a very unsatisfactory state as regards its sanitary arrangements. This recalls to my mind the fact that about ten years ago there were cases of enteric fever in the houses belonging to officers of the Lord Lieutenant's household. I remember in one case a friend of mine had a member of his family down with fever in a house belonging to the Dean of the Chapel Royal, and I believe there was another house in the yard at which there was also a case of enteric fever. There is one thing which I should like to mention before I sit down, although I only do so with a view of drawing your Lordships' attention to it. I have heard it stated, although I am not prepared to say that I have not heard it denied, that Captain Coddington, of the Royal Engineers, who died last winter, possibly received the infection in a place known as Aldborough House, which is the Ordnance Store, in the east part of Dublin, near the Great Northern Railway. I do not know whether that is the case or not, but this barrack or store was undoubtedly built originally as a private residence for the Earl of Aldborough, and I should imagine that, like all the houses of that period, the drainage was extremely deficient, and probably there was a cesspool under the house. Whether that will be found to be so or not I do not know, but I just call my noble Friend's attention to that point. I have said all now

that I think is necessary in explaining my objects in putting this Question.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord HARRIS): My Lords, with reference to the Question which my noble Friend has put to me, it appears, with regard to the drains from the hospital, that they have been disconnected, and it is believed that they are perfectly safe now. With regard to the latrines, the recommendations of the Cameron-Grimshaw Report have been attended to, and are being carried out. With regard to the guard-rooms, Mr. Stanhope has, within the last few months, obtained the services of Mr. Rogers Field, a well-known sanitary engineer, who has been in Dublin, and who is about to present a Report upon the Royal Barracks and upon the Richmond Bridewell. He has also inspected the guard-rooms both at the Castle and at the Bank. I believe there are insanitary conditions in connection with those two guard-rooms, and the attention of the authorities who have to do with those buildings will be called to the matter. I think in one case it will be the Governor of the Bank, and in the other case the Board of Works. With regard to Aldborough House, I will certainly take a note of what my noble Friend said, but I believe I am justified in saying that, as a matter of fact, Captain Coddington could not have got the infection at any barrack in Dublin. Mr. Stanhope was so anxious about the state of the Barracks in Dublin, that he determined to get a further Report from a sanitary engineer, in addition to that presented by Sir Charles Cameron and Dr. Grimshaw, and that Report I hope to be able to lay upon the Table of the House in a few days. There has been a very exhaustive examination, not only of the Barracks themselves, but of the subsoil beneath. But as regards the whole question of barrack accommodation in Dublin, I am to state that it has been determined to deal with the matter in a general way in one large scheme, and Mr. Stanhope is not at present prepared to say what the details of that scheme may be. An additional amount of space has been obtained since last year by utilizing Richmond Bridewell for a certain number of troops, and in that way relieving the Royal Barracks, but if the Richmond Bridewell is to be made a permanent barrack that will mean considerable alteration, and the troops who are now there will have to obtain room somewhere else. As regards the work that has been done in the past year, the guard rooms in the Royal Square have been excavated and concreted and ventilated under the boards. The alterations of the latrines have been carried out, and demolitions to improve the circulation of air have been carried out, and about £1,400 have been spent upon them. With regard to the demolitions, I may say at once that the demolitions recommended by the Cameron-Grimshaw Report have been, in the main, approved and carried out, but not exactly in the way that Sir Charles Cameron and Dr. Grimshaw recommended. They recommended that the east and west sides of the Royal Square should be demolished and a part of the west side of the Palatine Square. That has not been carried out, but they are to be disused for troops and to be used for store-houses instead. The demolitions which they recommended at the north-east and north-west corners of the Royal Square will be carried out, and certain demolitions which they did not recommend, but which have been approved now by Mr. Stanhope, on Mr. Roger Field's recommendation, will be carried out at the north-west, the south-west, and the south-east corners of Palatine Square. Palatine Square will then be in very much the same state as the Stable Square, and will have free access of air to all corners. There is a building to the north of Palatine Square, which I believe is in a very unsatisfactory state. Mr. Stanhope examined it on his visit there and has decided that it shall be demolished, and a wall running from it to the north-west corner of Palatine Square will also be taken down and the land will be slanted up. The new barracks at Grangegorman are proceeding as rapidly as possible, and some £16,000 have been taken in the current year's Estimates for expenditure there. The Riding School there will be pushed on as a special service, in order that the Riding School behind the Royal Square may be taken down, the present arrangement being considered by Mr. Stanhope very unsatisfactory, having regard to the building below preventing the free access of air. The ground-floor on the north side of the

Royal Square will be used for stores, instead of for troops, as it is now. The demolitions in the passages between the Green Squares have been carried out, as recommended by the Cameron-Grimshaw Report, and, in addition, the south ends of both passages which were not recommended in the Report; so that there will be now a perfectly free current of air through the passages between the three barracks. At present it is not intended to carry out the demolition in Cavalry Square and in Stable Square; the access of air which is obtained by the demolition of the south end of the passages is considered sufficient in that case. With regard to the work that has to be done in the current year, a sum of £10,000 has been taken for demolitions, re-appropriations, and sanitary improvements at the Royal Barracks, and also a sum of about £1,200 for sanitary services at other barracks in Dublin. With regard to the Richmond Barracks, upon which there is also a Report from Mr. Rogers-Field, £400 is provided for carrying out the subsoil drainage, in addition to the work that has been carried on in the past year, upon which some £700 has been expended. I believe Mr. Stanhope has also in consideration the question of demolition both at Linen Hall and at Ship Street, which he examined himself personally, and about which he thought there were unsanitary conditions which might be improved; but I believe that arrangements upon that particular point have not yet been completed. I may venture to say, with regard to enteric cases from the Dublin garrison, there has been a marked improvement in the last month. I am certainly justified in saying that there has been no case of enteric fever at the Barracks in the last fortnight; and I believe I am justified in saying that there has been no case of enteric fever at the Barracks in the last month.

FACTORY LEGISLATION IN INDIA.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his statement at Oldham on January 25th, that a Factory Act would soon be introduced in India, was correctly reported, said: My Lords, on the 5th of November last the Manchester Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution by a majority of 10—38 to 28—recommending that the British Factory Acts, so far as they related to women and children, should be extended to British India. The seconder of this resolution, Mr. Stuttard, said, in a letter to the *Manchester Courier*—

> "Surely it will be better for the physical welfare of the Hindoo to remain in agricultural employment and give us plenty of cotton, rather than be attracted to the ranks of mill operatives."

The members of the Chamber of Commerce who had had Indian experience opposed the resolution, while those who supported it showed that they knew little of the conditions under which the Bombay mills are worked. Although that resolution was proposed on the grounds of humanity to the Bombay operatives, it is only doing justice to Manchester men and to the Manchester Press to say that the mask of humanity was soon dropped, and the motive of a wish to check rival competition put forward. If, however, the Indian Government concede the Manchester request for the introduction of the British Factory Acts into India, it will lay itself open to the charge of hypocrisy for taking thought of humanity at Bombay, whence no complaints have arisen, while neglecting the calls of humanity in the Assam tea-plantations, and not interfering to prevent the great mortality of the Bengal coolies on their journey to Assam, nor taking care that the coolie hospitals in Assam should be efficient, and neglecting a duty which the Colonial Office performed for the Indian emigrants to the West India Islands and to British Guiana. The vote of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce was met at Bombay on the 19th of December by a meeting of the Millowners' Association. It was stated at that meeting that while in Lancashire 65 per cent. of the hands were women, the work done by those women was done in Bombay by adult men. The Bombay operatives had two days in the week, and holidays of from one to six months every one or two years to go home to their villages. The women stayed away from the mill for four or five days every month, putting substitutes in their places. The hands left their work four or five times a-day from 10 to 15 minutes, besides half an hour for dinner. It was also

shown that to do the same amount of work three and a third more hands were employed in Bombay than in Lancashire; and as no gas was used in the Bombay mills the hours of labour were restricted to daylight. The longest days were of 13 hours 13 minutes, and the shortest of 11 hours. The *Times of India* of November 30, 1888, writing on that subject, said—

"We have a limitation already of the hours of female and child labour, and, as Mr. Bythell pointed out, 'there are four times as many persons in an Indian mill to turn out the same quantity of work as was turned out in a Lancashire mill.' The hours are long here, no doubt; but the natives of this country love to dawdle over their work. The old Bombay members of the Manchester Chamber understood the position exactly; and though they, too, are interested in the supremacy of Manchester, they were too honest to conceal the truth. We have to thank this honest minority for so clearly exposing the motive behind this ingenuous attempt to 'lift the poor people of India.'"

I may remind your Lordships that the *Times of India* is not a journal representing the natives of India, but it is a newspaper which attends chiefly to the views of the Anglo-Indian community in that country. Now, my Lords, I would point out to you the inconsistency of a Chamber of Commerce which professes free-trade opinions asking for protection for one British industry alone while all are suffering, and that not against the foreigner, but against our Indian fellow-subjects. What is to be thought of the inconsistency of the noble Viscount for encouraging such hopes, if he did encourage them, while it is notorious that Members of the Conservative Party, desirous of standing well with their Leaders, are compelled to make their private opinions as to unrestricted imports subservient to Party purposes? Is the noble Viscount prepared on all ocasions to support the resolutions passed by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce? Is he aware that last November that Chamber passed a fair-trade resolution by a majority of 73 to 13, and though at a poll of the members, suggested by a portion of the directors, that vote was, naturally enough under all the circumstances, reversed, no fewer than 383 out of 1,004 circulars were not replied to. It is therefore certain that these 383 were not very zealous free-traders, and the two parties may be equally balanced in that Chamber of Commerce. There is another reason why the noble Viscount should not have shown at Oldham any sympathy for the Manchester vote for a British Factory Act in India; that is, that his doing so was in disaccord with the first speech delivered by Lord Lansdowne after he landed in India, in which he said that he would do his utmost to encourage native industries that came in aid of agriculture, which could not provide sufficient employment for the people of India. What reason was there for informing the people of Oldham of the Secretary of State's thoughts and intentions. Was it done to catch votes? Was it an electioneering speech? Will the noble Viscount say "No," but that he spoke as a Lancashire man, finding himself in his own county and among friends? In that case the noble Viscount should remember that when he became Secretary of State for India he became the guardian and trustee of the interests of the people of India—their only guardian, and ought to think of them before thinking of Lancashire. The noble Viscount, at Oldham, indulged in prophecy as to the boldness of any man who would propose to re-impose the cotton duties in India. Certainly to do so at Oldham would require extraordinary boldness. But can the noble Viscount be sure that he will not be obliged himself to propose this in India? Through the repeal of these duties the salt tax has been increased and cannot be further increased, and the opium revenue is diminishing. The noble Viscount referred in his speech to the heartburnings caused by the repeal of the cotton duties. Was my noble Friend reminded of those by a gentleman who supported him on the platform, the Member for Oldham, and is my noble Friend aware what that gentleman formerly thought and wrote on the subject of sacrificing the interests of India to Manchester? Mr. J. M. Maclean, who now represents Oldham in the other House, when formerly an editor of the *Bombay Gazette*, wrote an article in that paper of February 28, 1876, in which he said—

"'Give Manchester what she wants or go'—that is, what Lord Salisbury demanded of the Viceroy. What can be more scandalous, to

avail ourselves of Lord Salisbury's own words, than for an English Minister deliberately to sell India to Manchester? Yet this is what the Secretary of State proposes to do. In return for the support given by Lancashire to the Conservatives at the last Election, and with an eye to future favours of the same kind, Lord Salisbury intends to deprive India of a revenue of three-quarters of a million sterling a year, to make a present of it, in the first instance at all events, to the English manufacturer of cotton goods. We trust there is sufficient political virtue left in England to expose and stigmatize this disgraceful transaction."

My Lords, I now beg leave to ask the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India the Question which stands in my name.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): My Lords, the noble Lord who has just sat down has asked me whether my statement at Oldham on the 25th of January, that a Factory Act would soon be introduced in India, was correctly reported, and why I made that statement, and why, if I was going to make that statement, I did not make it from my place in Parliament. The noble Lord does not ask me whether I made the statement, but assumes that I did so. My answer is that I never made the statement at all, and, therefore, the statement was not correctly reported. What I did state was this. The Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, Mr. Redgrave, which was published towards the end of 1887, contained the result of an investigation by Mr. Jones upon the working of the Factory Act of 1880 in India. As the Report of Mr. Jones was thought worthy of being embodied in his Report by the Chief Inspector of Factories in England, I thought it was well to call the attention of the Viceroy to it, and to ask him to make the necessary inquiries as to whether the factory legislation in India did require amendment or whether it did not. Those inquiries are in course of being made, and no answer has as yet been sent to me from Bombay, where the greater number of factories are. Until I receive the Report that has been asked for it is impossible for me to form any opinion as to whether it is necessary that a Factory Act should be introduced or not. I have no objection now to repeat what I did say at Oldham, which was that it makes no difference to me, as regarded factory labour, what is said by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce or by people in Bombay, because the protection of one industry against another has nothing whatever to do with the reasons for which Factory Acts are passed. As I understand, the whole basis of a Factory Act is that it is absolutely necessary for the protection of the health and the lives of women and children employed in particular industries. This is the only foundation upon which Factory Acts rest. They have nothing to do with the protection of one industry against another, or one class against another, or one country against another. Therefore, whenever it becomes my duty to consider whether there ought or not to be an amendment of the law in India, such consideration will be based upon that principle alone. The noble Lord further asked whether steps had been taken to see that the coolies of Assam and Bengal were properly treated. Some time ago an Act was passed in connection with that subject, and the question was raised whether the Coolie Act should be amended when Lord Hartington was Secretary of State, and his Lordship thought that its operation should be tested for two or three years longer. At the end of that period I had to consider whether I would amend the law or give it a further trial. I found that great improvement had been effected by the Act, and I, therefore, determined to give it another trial and extend it for two or three years. The result has been that very great precautions have been taken under the Act, and I received a despatch from the Viceroy last month saying that very considerable improvement has taken place in the position of the coolies. If the noble Lord will move for a copy of that despatch I should be glad to lay it on the Table. As regards death rates, they vary considerably in different parts of India. Some of the tea gardens are particularly unhealthy, but those are being narrowly watched. I think the last average death rate recorded was 36 per thousand, which is a little above the ordinary death rate among Indian populations. I think I have answered all the Questions of the noble Lord, and I trust I have done so to his satisfaction.

STANDING ORDERS.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN), in introducing the Report of the Select Committee made to the

House on the 31st of July last, said: My Lords, when in the course of last summer I moved your Lordships to appoint a Committee to inquire into the Standing Orders of this House relating to the conduct of public business, I explained to the House the reasons which induced the Government to make that proposal and the objects which they proposed to themselves in doing so, and I do not think it will be necessary for me to trouble your Lordships with any repetition of such statement. There is, however, one point to which I wish to allude once more—namely, to the disclaimer which I then made as to there being any idea or intention that the appointment of a Committee to carry on this inquiry should be either in substitution or anticipation of any more ambitious schemes or proposals which might be brought forward in the future for the reforming of the constitution of this House, or its reconstruction as a branch of the Legislature. It appears to me that the question of the constitution of this House and the subject of the conduct of our legislative proceedings are entirely distinct, and should be kept separate. If we are to wait until any reform is carried out in the construction of this House, with the assistance which has been promised to us by the noble Earl the late Secretary for Foreign Affairs (the Earl of Rosebery), having regard to his Lordship's duties in connection with the London County Council, it is likely that for some years to come we should leave the Rules which govern our proceedings unchanged and unamended. My Lords, if it be true, as has been stated by noble Lords, and by others outside the House, that for many years past this House has not addressed itself to the task of remodelling the Rules of its procedure, it appears to me that however short or however long may be our tenure of the position which we now occupy as a branch of the Legislature, it is incumbent upon us to do what we can in order to meet the criticism, and if possible to carry out the wishes, of those who desire to amend the proceedings of this House. My Lords, the Committee which the House appointed to consider this question was one which I think I may venture to say must carry the greatest possible authority. If noble Lords will look at the names of the Peers who constituted that Committee, it will be seen that they were taken from all sides of the House. The Members were representative of the various stages of thought upon this and other questions, and I think it will be at once conceded that the tribunal to which these Rules have been referred was one which may be considered, not only impartial, but in the highest degree authoritative. I did not receive any great encouragement from the noble Earl opposite the Leader of the Opposition, when I ventured to make the Motion upon this subject; but I feel bound to add that the noble Earl consented to serve upon the Committee, and therefore we had the invaluable advice and assistance which his unequalled knowledge and experience of the procedure of this House would naturally give him, and I must therefore acknowledge the great assistance which he was able to give us in all our proceedings. Then there was another noble and learned Lord who sits on the same bench opposite, and I cannot help expressing my regret that he is unable to be present upon this occasion—I mean the noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell). One at least of the most important provisions recommended in this Report is due to the initiative of the noble and learned Lord, and I think that all Members of the Committee will agree that we should derive the very greatest possible advantage from his experience. When I say that the Committee also had the advantage of the services of the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and others who have in public and in private taken the greatest interest in this question, I think I have said sufficient to show that this Report may, at all events, be received as representative of the general body of opinion in all parts of your Lordships' House. Turning now to the Report, the main difficulty with which the Committee were confronted was, on the one hand, the opinion of those Members of the House who are jealous of the ancient forms and procedure of the House, and who I believe would be best satisfied by leaving things absolutely *in statu quo*; and, on the other hand, there was the feeling of those who would wish for a larger and greater measure of reform and change than is recommended in the Report. It has been our duty as far as

possible to steer a middle course between these two sets of opinion, and I trust that the House will think that we have, to a certain extent, been successful in that aim. Speaking generally, we decided to remove, where possible, all paragraphs in the Standing Orders enforcing absolutely obsolete and useless forms, forms which had for a long time dropped entirely into the background. We wish to preserve that which is antique, but, if possible, to do away with that which is antiquated. Then, my Lords, there are certain new provisions which will be found in the amended copy of the Standing Orders which has been furnished to your Lordships, and which I will endeavour as shortly as possible to explain, and it occurs to me that possibly I might in a very few words be able so to classify these new Rules and changes as to make them clearer to your Lordships than they would be by a cursory examination of the papers now in your Lordships' hands. With regard to the obsolete forms, your Lordships will find there are several, No. XVII., No. XXXVII. and No. LVII., to which I need not further allude. They are simply Rules which have long dropped out of use. There is one, No. XLII., which will be found on page 29, which has been amended so as to conform with the present practice of the House. Then there is a set of Rules, some of which are important in themselves, because they relate to messages and conferences between this and the other House of Parliament. I think that all of us must wish that the relations between this House and the other House should be as cordial and conciliatory as possible. These Rules which we have struck out, and to which we have proposed Amendments, were not only objectionable and even offensive in themselves, but calculated somewhat to hinder that comity between the two Houses which is at all times desirable. At paragraphs LXXXVIII. and LXXXIX., at page 50, your Lordships will find the new Rules which we have inserted instead of the old Rules, the new Rules being, in fact, a statement of the procedure which has been in use for some time past. Then, my Lords, in reference to the conduct of Debates and Procedure, your Lordships will see at page 16, Paragraph XXIV., that we have amended the old Standing Order by omitting the part which prohibits our calling each other by our proper names and titles. No new Rule has been prepared providing that we are to call ourselves by our own names, but the prohibition has simply been removed. Your Lordships will be fully aware of the inconvenience which has occasionally arisen from the practice which it is intended to reform. There is a small alteration on page 16, also in Rule XXV., enabling the Mover of a Bill to speak in reply at every stage of that Bill. Then I come to a provision which is, I think, more important. On page 22, paragraph XXXA, your Lordships will see that a provision has been made for there being a quorum of the House upon any division, with certain limitations. The chief objection which has been found to the absence of any rule as to a quorum is that it has been possible that a Bill which passed through the other House of Parliament, after considerable discussion, upon some occasions should be rejected by a very inadequate number of Peers towards the latter end of the Session. Perhaps I had better read the proposed new Rule to your Lordships—

"If, on a Division upon any stage of a Bill, it shall appear that 30 Lords are not present in the House, the Lord Speaker shall declare the question not decided, but the debate thereon adjourned to the next sitting of the House; and if such Division take place when the House is in Committee, the Chairman shall declare the question not decided, whereupon the House shall resume, and shall be again in Committee at the next sitting of the House."

That, my Lords, I think, will remove what was formerly a reproach as to the inadequate attendance of Peers upon occasions when important legislation has been before the House. Then there is another paragraph, which provides not only for an adjournment of the business in question, but it gives power to the House to order that the business in question at the time of the adjournment should be taken at the next sitting, or at some later hour of the evening. This, of course, I need hardly say, refers to the difficulty which has been experienced in this House, and not in this House alone, of carrying on discussions after 8 o'clock, or even before 8 o'clock. Great anxiety has been felt that the debate should be closed at or about 8 o'clock, and the result has been that

some questions have been inadequately discussed, and many noble Lords who wish to take part in the debates have been prevented from giving their valuable assistance to the House. The Rule which has been proposed by the Committee is as follows :—

"If at the close of the speech of any Lord it shall be moved that the business then in hand be adjourned, or the House being in Committee that the House be resumed, and it shall be so ordered, it shall be lawful for the House thereupon, without notice given, to make further order that the business in question shall be taken first, either at some later hour of the evening or on some future sitting-day to be then fixed."

Then, my Lords, there is one further Amendment to which I ought to call your attention, and that is at page 24, No. XXXIV. This provides for the taking up of Bills that come up from the House of Commons. Your Lordships may remember that there was a Rule that if a Bill were brought up from the House of Commons after twelve sitting days without some noble Lord giving notice of the second reading, the Bill should be dropped for the current Session. It has occasionally happened that a Bill has been dropped merely through the neglect of the Member having charge of it. Provision is now made that such Bills may be taken up at a later period of the Session, with certain limitations. This is a matter which I think the noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell) brought forward last Session, and it is a small alteration which I think will commend itself to the House. Then I come, my Lords, to what is the most important of the recommendations of the Committee, which will be found on page 27, paragraph XLI. The Committee recommend the following Rule :—

"At the commencement of each Session of Parliament Standing Committees shall be appointed, to one or other of which, unless the House shall otherwise order, every Bill shall be committed, instead of to a Committee of the whole House; and, on the Report of the Standing Committee being received, the Bill shall not be re-committed unless the House so order. The Standing Committees shall not exceed four in number, and shall be appointed for such classes of Bills as the House may determine."

There are other provisions enumerated in following paragraphs which, perhaps, I may summarize as follows :—Standing Committees, first of all, are to be nominated by a Committee of Selection. They shall consist of not more than fifty nor less than twenty Lords, and the Committee of Selection is to have the power to add not more than ten Lords in respect of any particular Bill. The quorum of a Standing Committee shall be twelve. The Standing Committee may appoint any Sub-Committee for the consideration of any Bill. The Chairmen of these Committees are to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, but there are not to be more than 12 nor less than eight Lords to serve as Chairmen, and they shall nominate amongst themselves the Chairman of each Standing Committee, and may change the Chairman from time to time. I should add that the Committee of Selection will consist of the Chairman of Committees and eight other Lords to be named by the House. Then, my Lords, I think the only other paragraphs to which I need call the attention of the House are to be found on page 12, Nos. XVIA. and XVIB. These allude to the absence of noble Lords. Your Lordships are aware that there has always been power in the House to enforce the attendance of its Members. That power has not been exercised for many years, and it is to be hoped that it will never be necessary to exercise it. The two Rules proposed are these—

"The absence of any Lord from this House, except for sufficient reason, shall not prevent the Committee of Selection from calling for his services.

"Lords may obtain leave of absence at the pleasure of the House upon cause shown."

These, my Lords, I think are the chief features of the Report to which I now beg to draw your Lordships' attention. I do not think I need add any further remarks. There were certain subjects which, to my regret, were withdrawn from the purview of the Committee, but I have gone at sufficient length into the result of the Committee's deliberations as far as they went, and I trust that the proposals made will commend themselves to the approval of the House.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, the noble Lord opposite has brought before your Lordships' House a subject of very great importance, and the recommendations of the Select Committee, constituted as it was of Members representing various views and opinions, deserve to receive, and I am sure will receive, careful consideration by your Lordships' House. I do not propose to

go through the alterations and additions to the Standing Order *seriatim*, but upon the most important change—namely, that of the appointment of Standing Committees—I may say that that proposition is one in which I heartily concur. My Lords, I take this opportunity of expressing the hope that the whole subject of Parliamentary reform will not form the subject of any Party debates, but will be dealt with by this House upon its own merits.

Earl BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I am sure I shall be expressing the sentiment of the House generally in paying tribute to the admirable manner in which the noble Lord has brought forward these proposals; but I must say that it appeared to me that there is one very great hiatus in his statement. He described very clearly what was proposed to be done, but he certainly ignored the very important question whether there was any reason at all for these changes in our Standing Orders. I do not myself see that any adequate ground has been made out for such a change. With regard to the proposal to appoint Standing Committees, I fear that the proposal will be the means of excluding a very large number of Peers from the debates in Committee, and I do not think that that is a very desirable thing. We are not so overwhelmed in work as they are in another place as to render it necessary so to economize our time. I can quite imagine this happening in your Lordships' House—that a Bill may be brought forward on which a Peer not accustomed to take much part in your Lordships' proceedings, and who would not naturally be a Member of any Standing Committee, might be able to bring to bear upon the discussion of that Bill a great deal of valuable information of the most useful kind, but, not being a Member of the Standing Committee, he would have no opportunity of giving the House the advantage of his criticism upon the various clauses of the Bill. The only opportunity he would have of discussing it would be either upon the second reading of the Bill or on the Report, but to rise and make a speech at a stage where you can only speak once is very different from being able to make frequent observations in Committee. Furthermore, I think your Lordships, in passing this new regulation, will be doing away with a very good opportunity for young Peers to take part in your Lordships' proceedings. If the present system had been found to work unfairly or inconveniently, then I could understand these changes being proposed; but I have never heard of any complaint in this direction. The complaints against your Lordships' proceedings are many and various, but I have never heard any complaint alleged against our proceedings in Committee in discussing a Bill. I cannot help thinking that this proposal is an imitation of the French Bureaux, which certainly have not been attended with happy consequences as regards the French Assembly. Anybody who is acquainted with the proceedings in the French Assembly will know that under the form of proceeding there, it is impossible to get that numerical proportion and balance of discussion which we get in our proceedings here. I trust we shall not adopt this particular proposal without full consideration. I am sure it is a great mistake, in an Assembly like this, to make change, without very full discussion and mature deliberation. I am for improvements, but I am distinctly against mere change; and in this case I really fail to see what we are to gain by alteration. With regard to the suggested alteration as to adjournments, I think the provisions proposed are very wise and proper. Again, I think it is hardly worth while to depart from our present Rules upon the subject of addressing one another by our names. The practice we have hitherto pursued is very decorous, and I do not think we shall gain in decorum by calling each other by our names and titles. I am not quite certain how the forms of the House will enable these complicated questions to be put, but certainly as regards the appointment of Standing Committees I must say "not content."

*THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, although I became a Member of this Committee last year, I was not able to serve upon it, and I therefore approach this matter with the disadvantage of not having heard the arguments which were, no doubt, put forward in favour of the proposal for Standing Committees. I heard, however, very fully from my noble and learned Friend (Lord Herschell) what his views were in making the suggestion, which, in point of fact, is only a modification of a proposal made by the noble

Marquess opposite. The noble Earl who has just sat down seems to think that there is nothing whatever in our present arrangements with regard to discussions in Committee which requires any alteration. I am quite unable to agree with him. I do not think he has at all apprehended the point in discussion in this matter. I do not suppose that it is the proceedings in Committee which are found to be defective, or which require alteration; but what we find is this, that there are a great number of small and comparatively unimportant Bills which pass through Committee without any notice or discussion whatever. Now it seems to me there is one function which is pre-eminently the function of this House, apart from any great initiative proposals, and that is the revision of Bills. It becomes more and more difficult, of course, for the other House, with the great multiplicity of business which they have, to give minute attention to Bills not of the first consequence. What we want is that all these Bills should be carefully scrutinized. What is everybody's business is always found to be nobody's business, and if the House is divided into small Committees, whose special business it is to consider the Bill referred to them, I think it will be of advantage to the country, and will redound very much to the credit of the House. Believing as I do that this alteration will lead to a more thorough examination of particular Bills, I certainly welcome the proposition. With regard to Bills of great importance, I apprehend that it is not intended to refer them to Committees of this kind. Of course they would come before the Committee of the whole House. With regard to noble Lords who might take a particular interest in a subject, and who might not happen to be upon the particular Standing Committee, I observe that there is a provision in the proposed Standing Order that any ten Members (or of course fewer) may be added to a Committee for the purpose of the discussion of any particular Bill; so that any Peer having special knowledge might be added, and the Committee would have the advantage of his experience.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I want to point out to my noble Friend that the proposals now before us have not the intention, and would not have the effect, of depriving this House of any control over its Committees. The House might, if it pleased, direct that a Bill, after it has passed the Standing Committee, shall be considered in Committee of the whole House. There will still be the stages of Report and Third Reading. I imagine that when a Bill has been read a second time the Motion put from the Chair will ordinarily be, "That the Bill be referred to a Standing Committee," and it will then be open to any Peer to move, instead of the words "Standing Committee," to insert the words "Committee of the whole House." The Question always is, "That this Bill be committed," and under the new Rules I suppose it would be simply necessary to add "to a Standing Committee." It would therefore come before the House on each occasion, and there would be full opportunity for every Member of the House to give his opinion. My Lords, I feel very strongly as a Member of this House for some years that Bills of a secondary class are not considered with that care which they deserve, and that we do not examine into the phraseology of Bills, and especially the references in the Bills which form so large a portion of our modern statutory language, with the care which might reasonably be expected of a House constituted as this is. Upon the whole I think the proposal a good one; but I would point out to your Lordships that we do not stand pledged to it for ever; if it turn out that the proposal does not answer, it will be easy to send the matter back to the Committee.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: My main object, my Lords, in rising is as far as possible to confirm what has fallen from the noble Lord opposite (Earl Beauchamp) as to its being desirable, and, indeed, indispensable, that each of these changes should be separately weighed, and canvassed, and considered. There is no sort of unity between the various alterations; they are not all subordinated to any common object, so as to make their being accepted or rejected *en bloc* either desirable or practicable, and I hope the noble Lord will see his way to giving the House an opportunity of considering the various proposals *seriatim*. Very little has been said about a proposal which

strikes me as of remarkable importance—namely, that Divisions shall not be taken unless thirty Peers are present. I merely wish for a moment to submit to noble Lords that that proposal is freighted with considerable consequences. It is clear that under such a regulation it would be possible in this House to defeat and throw out Bills without giving the appearance of opposition. I need only suggest what comment would have been made had such a course been adopted with reference to the Irish legislation of the past few years. I do not affect any *arrière pensée* for the Standing Orders as they originally stood, but I do maintain before your Lordships that these suggested Amendments ought not to be accepted without careful deliberation, and in that view it is essential that the House should have the opportunity of expressing its opinion upon them separately.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I would like to ask whether it is necessary to-day that this Report should be approved in all particulars? It appears to me that if the Amendments were brought before the House in Committee of the whole House, we might express our opinion upon them in their order. I do not think the discussion need necessarily be a long one, but it seems to me that a very considerable amount of inconvenience will occur unless these proposals are taken one by one, because, as to some of them, there will probably be no opposition, whilst others of them will excite a great deal of opposition, and may give rise to considerable discussion. I entirely concur with what noble Lords have said as to the extremely representative character of the Committee whose Report we are discussing, but I may point out that the Committee appear to have been very much divided upon some of the most important of the proposals which they make. Two of them come before your Lordships as the decisions of 11 against 10; and I do not think that, in a matter of this kind, we should take the Report of the Committee upon trust, or hurriedly come to conclusions upon it.

LORD COLVILLE OF CULROSS: My Lords, I do not think the House should be called upon to give an opinion upon these new regulations unless they can be discussed and decided upon individually. Some of the recommendations, as has been pointed out, will have to be very carefully examined into. I may instance the paragraph on page 22—

> "If on a Division upon any stage of a Bill, it shall appear that 30 Lords are not present in the House, the Lord Speaker shall declare the question not decided, but the debate thereon adjourned to the next sitting of the House; and if such Division take place when the House is in Committee, the Chairman shall declare the question not decided, whereupon the House shall resume, and shall be again in Committee at the next sitting of the House."

I have only to say in respect to that—and I think I shall be borne out by those of my noble Friends who have had any very long experience in this House—that towards the beginning of August it will be found a matter of the greatest difficulty to collect 30 Peers together in the House. That is merely one point. I daresay there are a great many others that might be mentioned, but it shows, I think, that we ought not to be called upon to give our consent to these alterations collectively.

LORD FITZGERALD: My Lords, the most important change which it appears to me is proposed to be effected is the appointment of Grand Committees, or, as they are called in these amended Orders, Standing Committees. Now, we find that that proposition was carried by ten votes to eight, so that it was not the unanimous opinion of the Committee. Your Lordships will remember that these Standing Committee Rules will apply to all Public Bills, and therefore will include Government Bills. I always understood that Government Bills were introduced on the sole responsibility of the Government; nay more, I have heard it said here, and heard it said here by a great constitutional authority, that to move to refer a Government Bill to a Select Committee was in the nature of a vote of censure on the Government, because the Government were solely responsible for their own Bills. I certainly approve of the Amendment proposed by the noble Earl opposite. I quite agree with what has fallen from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) that, with regard to Bills not of the first importance, the course of proceeding is by no means creditable to the House, and no doubt it would be an improvement if Bills of that kind were referred in the first in-

stance to a Standing Committee. I think the better course will be that these Amendments should be put to the House one by one.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, I have no right, I know, to speak again, but I should like to be allowed to answer a suggestion which seems to have been made that this question has been, to some extent, sprung upon the House suddenly. I think it is due to myself that I should explain that this Committee was appointed on the 7th of June, and the Report was made on the 31st of July. During the Autumn Session last year, I stated to the House that probably it would not be convenient that we should consider this Report at that period of the year, but I gave notice that I should ask the House to consider it as soon as we met this year. Therefore, I really think that I may disclaim any insinuation that this matter is sprung upon the House, and I may also say, with all due respect, that I think noble Lords have had considerable time to consider the course that they should pursue with regard to this Report. My Lords, with reference to the suggestion which has been made that this Report should be considered in Committee of the whole House, I think that such a suggestion is impracticable, because it is not the practice of the House to sit in Committee to consider the Report of another Committee. That being the case, the natural order would be that all the proposed new Standing Orders should be put *en bloc*, and on the debate which will ensue noble Lords will be able to move any Amendment which may occur to them as to any particular proposal. The House perhaps was not aware that that would be the procedure that would be adopted to-night, and to that extent, perhaps, the House may have been taken by surprise. In these circumstances, may I venture to make the following suggestion. I would propose that the consideration of these Amendments may be adjourned to any period which may be considered convenient, in order that noble Lords may have time to consider what Amendments they would like to propose.

EARL BEAUCHAMP: May I point out that if there is merely an adjournment of this debate, noble Lords who have already spoken will be debarred from further participation in the debate, and therefore will not be able to propose any Amendments?

EARL CADOGAN: I take it that if in the interval noble Lords gave notice of the Amendments which they wish to make, it would be perfectly competent for them to make them, although they had already spoken this evening.

*THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS: My Lords, I rise to suggest whether it might not be convenient to the House if, instead of merely adjourning the debate, the noble Lord the President of the Council would consent that the Question should be dropped and give a new notice for another day, which would set all noble Lords at liberty to speak upon the Question, whereas if the debate is merely adjourned they will not be able to do so.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I think my noble Friend's suggestion is very well worthy of consideration, but at the same time it hardly meets, as I apprehend, the exact difficulty in which we are placed. The desire, no doubt, is, by some expedient or other, to take each of these separate Questions *seriatim*. These Questions are wholly distinct one from the other—they have scarcely any relation to each other, and if this heterogeneous mass of propositions are put *en bloc* it will be really impossible to come to anything like a satisfactory conclusion. I am sure nobody will for a moment suppose that my noble Friend who has taken charge of this measure would have desired to take the House by surprise. That would be entirely foreign to his nature, and I know no one who is more accustomed to deal in a perfectly straightforward manner with anything which passes through his hands. At the same time, I think it is likely that this discussion will be extremely valuable to the House when the matter is properly before us. I would now press upon my noble Friend at the head of the Government that he should exercise the resources of his fertile imagination in discovering somehow or other a method by which each of these separate and very difficult subjects can be submitted to your Lordships one by one, in order to obtain a decision upon them.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It seems to me, my Lords, that this will be exactly the right method. The first Motion will be that this Report be

now considered. After that we shall take, *seriatim*, Amendments on all the points. Then comes the final Motion that these be the Standing Orders of this House. That seems to me to give all the opportunities which noble Lords can desire.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords; I rise for the purpose of making a suggestion which I think will meet all the difficulties which appear to have arisen. It is quite true that the only satisfactory way of discussing these Standing Orders is to take them *seriatim*, and it is equally true that that will take an enormous amount of time; but I think there is a middle course, which is this—that we should take *seriatim* all those Standing Orders which are absolutely new, and then take those in which any alteration has been made, leaving without discussion those Standing Orders in which no alteration has been made. I do not think that noble Lords will find that that will take a very great deal of time, and I am inclined to think that it will be satisfactory to the supporters of the proposed changes as well as to those who wish to oppose them.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I would point out that it is only this evening that we have had from the noble Earl (Earl Cadogan) any explanation of the grounds upon which the Select Committee came to the conclusions reported to us. It cannot be expected that noble Lords who have now, for the first time, heard that explanation should commit themselves without more mature consideration, and I cannot help thinking that the better course would be to take these alterations *seriatim*.

*THE EARL OF DERBY: I think, my Lords, we shall find it impossible to discuss this matter satisfactorily unless we take the Amendments one by one. Here is one that, upon a Division upon any stage of a Bill, a quorum of 30 Members shall be required; here another constituting Standing Committees; another relating to conferences with the other House. How is it possible that in one discussion we can deal with all these subjects, which have little or no connection with one another?

THE EARL OF CORK AND ORRERY: I would suggest to my noble Friend that he should withdraw his present Motion, and bring it on after we have had time to look into the Amendments and alterations proposed.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, I was about to ask the leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn, and the Order, on Motion, discharged.

SWEATING SYSTEM.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, in rising to move the Resolution of which I have given notice, it will not be necessary for me to make many observations. Although the last Session offered unusual facilities in the way of time, your Lordships Committee were unable to conclude their labours, and, as the Chairman of the Committee, it has devolved upon me to ask your Lordships to re-appoint them. I beg to move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to continue the inquiry into the sweating system in the United Kingdom, and to report thereon to the House, and that the witnesses before the said Select Committee be examined on oath.

The Motion was agreed to, and the Lords following were named of the Committee—

L. Abp. Canterbury.
E. Derby.
E. Brownlow.
V. Gordon, (E. Aberdeen).
L. Clinton.
L. Clifford of Chudleigh.
L. Foxford, (E. Limerick).
L. Kenry, (E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl).
L. Sandhurst.
L. Rothschild.
L. Monkswell.
L. Thring.

LAND TRANSFER BILL.

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY): My Lords, my object in asking your Lordships to allow the Land Transfer Bill to be re-introduced immediately is to obtain, if your Lordships shall so please, the re-appointment of the Select Committee which worked upon the Bill of last Session up to Clause 54, and which, I venture to hope, will be willing to bring the work to completion early in the present Session. Under the circumstances, I presume your Lordships would think it convenient to postpone any discussion either of the principles or of the details of the

Bill until it shall have returned from the Select Committee.

Bill to simplify titles and facilitate the transfer of land in England.—Presented (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª.

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY): I ask your Lordships' leave to re-introduce the Bill for amending the Lunacy Laws. It is from no fault of this House, or of those who have held the Office which I occupy, that the numerous amendments of the law on this most important subject which are contained in this Bill have not been realized long ago. Most of these changes meet with general assent; some of them are of very substantial value. I persevere in my endeavour to have this matter dealt with, and leave to others the responsibility of neglecting it. With your Lordships' assistance, I hope to send the Bill, as soon as possible, to the other House, where it is the intention of the Government to give as early an opportunity as may be practicable of having it considered. I shall not think it necessary in this House, where the same Bill has passed so many times, to do more than point out in Committee the very few differences between this Bill and its predecessors, and to invite your Lordships' assistance in dealing with the serious question of mechanical restraint which I regret to find prevailing in some quarters. I shall very shortly introduce a Bill consolidating the Lunacy Acts, and I hope that whatever may be the fate of such parts of this Amendment Bill as are subjects of controversy, at least those parts which bear on the work of consolidation will be allowed to proceed without the loss of another year.

Bill to amend the Acts relating to Lunatics.—Presented (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª.

TRUST COMPANIES BILL.

A Bill to enable incorporated Companies to act as executors, administrators, and trustees, and in other fiduciary capacities.—Presented (*The Lord Hobhouse*); read 1ª. (No. 10.)

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, February 25, 1889.

NEW WRIT ISSUED.

For South-West Riding of the County of York (Barnsley Division), *v.* Courtney Stanhope Kenny, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

QUESTIONS.

BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, if he intends to proceed with the Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill during the present Session.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): It is not intended to proceed with the Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill until after the subject of Scotch Local Government has been considered by the House.

THE NEW LAW COURTS.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the First Commissioner of Works whether, in accordance with his promise made last Session, he has caused an investigation to be made as to the condition of the roofs and other parts of the New Law Courts; and, if so, what has been the result?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, University of Dublin): Yes, Sir; a careful inspection was made at the new Law Courts during the long vacation in last autumn, and the roofs were found to be in several cases in a very unsatisfactory condition, principally from the shrinkage of the large timbers used in their construction; but the defects have been carefully remedied, and the roofs are reported to me to be now perfectly safe.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE DE BEERS MINE.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he could give the House any information as to a concession alleged to have been recently granted by Lobengula to Mr. Rhodes, Chairman of the De Beers Mine, or to Mr. Rudd, the agent of Mr. Rhodes; whether he is aware that such conces-

sion purported to convey certain mineral rights in Mashonaland in consideration of the payment by Mr. Rhodes or by Mr. Rudd of £1,200 and 1,000 Martini-Henry rifles; whether he is aware that at the date of the grant of such concession Sir Sydney Shippard, Her Majesty's Administrator in Bechuanaland, was present in Lobengula's kraal; whether, on 14th May, 1888, Her Majesty's Government declared it would give no countenance to any concession unless made with the knowledge of and approved by the High Commissioner; whether such concession was approved by the High Commissioner, and has been sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government; and, whether he will lay upon the Table the Corespondence and Documents relating to such concession?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government have received the text of a concession alleged to have been granted to Mr. Rudd. It purports to include all Lobengula's dominions, except the Tati district; and the money consideration appears to be an annuity of £1,260 a year, besides a present of 1,000 rifles and of 100,000 rounds of ammunition. Sir Sydney Shippard was 100 miles away from the chief's kraal on the day the concession was signed, and had no knowledge of the negotiations. Mr. Moffat, the Assistant Commissioner, was also absent from the chief's kraal at the time. Such a letter as is referred to in the fourth paragraph of the Question was written from the Colonial Office on the 14th of May, and will be found in Blue Book C, 5,524, page 23. It is believed that the High Commissioner views Mr. Rudd's concession as an advantageous arrangement on grounds of public policy; but he has had no occasion to approve or disapprove it, and Her Majesty's Government do not consider it necessary to express any opinion, either as to its validity or merits. Papers on the subject will be included in the next Bechuanaland Blue Book.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Will the hon. Gentleman say whether, on the 14th of May last, Her Majesty's Government declined to give any countenance to a concession unless such concession was approved of by the High Commissioner; and whether it has since given countenance to this concession?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I think I have already answered the Question.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The hon. Gentleman said that the High Commissioner had had no occasion to express approval or disapproval. My question now is whether, Her Majesty's Government having, on the 14th of May, declined to give any countenance to a concession unless it was approved of by the High Commissioner, they have since given consent to this concession?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Her Majesty's Government have not thought it necessary to express any opinion as to its validity or merits.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Have they, then, changed their opinion since the 14th of May last?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: No.

THE PRISONS IN CAPE COLONY.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the shocking state of the prisons in Cape Colony, as shown by the report made last year to the Cape Parliament, and to the ill-treatment and insufficient and bad food of the prisoners undergoing sentence; whether it is true that female prisoners have been subjected to criminal assaults by the gaolers; that some of the gaols are, as reported, "never free from vermin," and that untried prisoners were found in the most wretched condition from bad food, "aggravated by the utter impossibility of their taking any exercise in the cramped space allowed them;" and whether the Government has taken, or will take, any action in the matter?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I have seen the report in question. A very searching inquiry was made, and was immediately followed by the passing (in August last), of a stringent Act for the removal of the abuses which had been brought to light. As the hon. Member is aware, these matters in Colonies which have responsible government are entirely within the jurisdiction of the Colonial Government.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that up to the present time, except the passing of an Act, no

thing has been done to improve the condition of the prisons, and that they still remain in the same horrible state?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I am not aware of the fact, but I will make inquiry.

IRELAND — MR. HODDER, R.M., AND THE ENNIS NATIONAL LEAGUE.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe), asked whether Mr. Hodder, R.M., informed certain persons at Ennis that his instructions were to suppress by force a meeting proposed to be held at that place on the 3rd February to express sympathy with Mr. O'Brien, if any resolutions condemning high Government officials were proposed; but if otherwise, he would not interfere with it; and whether Mr. Hodder, R.M., entered the room, the proceedings having subsequently commenced, and dispersed the meeting by the aid of a force of Royal Irish Constabulary he brought with him?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I am informed that the facts are not accurately represented in the Question. The meeting was being organized by the reputed officials of the local National League, which was suppressed in that district as an unlawful association. The Resident Magistrate did not state that he would not interfere with the meeting on the condition indicated in the Question. He did say that a meeting held for the purpose of promoting sedition and bringing the Government into contempt, and for the denunciation of Government officials, would be an unlawful assembly. The meeting was not dispersed by the police, the assembly having separated on being called upon to do so by the Resident Magistrate.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: May I ask if the Solicitor General for Ireland has received his information from the Resident Magistrate himself?

MR. MADDEN: I received the information through the usual source.

THE COAL MINES ACT.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the case mentioned by him on 10th May 1888, as throwing doubt on the application of Clause 10 of "The Coal Mines, &c. Act, 1887," has yet been decided; and, does the Home Department now hold that the clause in question is universally and unconditionally operative except as specified in the Act of 1887?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The Justices have only a few days ago stated and signed the special case, which was entered for hearing on Saturday last. Everything will be done to secure a speedy decision, but until that is given it would not be proper for me to give a reply to the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask what delayed the decision of this special case for 12 months?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Justices have been pressed more than once, but only signed the special case on Saturday.

MR. BRADLAUGH: In ordinary cases the Justices have yielded to pressure, but it does not appear to have been exercised in this case.

ZULULAND.—REBELLIOUS CHIEFS.

MR. ALEXANDER M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the sentence of imprisonment with hard labour, reported to have been passed by the Special Court, now sitting at Ekshowe in Zululand, on Somkeli and other Zulu chiefs charged with rebellion, is now being enforced; whether the Government has been informed as to the action taken by the Court in the case of Ndabuko, who is reported to have reserved his defence on the plea that he had not been able to obtain legal assistance; whether the proposed trial of Dinizulu at Ekshowe will be proceeded with after the leave to appeal against the proceedings of that Court which has been granted by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; and whether the course to be taken by the authorities in Natal as regards the other Zulu chiefs will be guided by the precedent established in the case of Dinizulu?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: In answer to the first paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, I have to say that the sentence is not now being

enforced. These chiefs will be detained, as they were before trial, pending the consideration by Her Majesty's Government of the proceedings in each case. The report of Ndabuko's case has not yet been received by Her Majesty's Government. It is understood that the trial of Dinizulu will be proceeded with. He has not appealed against the proceedings of the Court before which he is to be tried. These proceedings have not commenced as far as we know. His appeal was against a judgment of the Supreme Court of Natal, upholding a warrant signed by the Governor, for the removal of Dinizulu into Zululand from Natal. This warrant purported to be issued under a colonial law, and the applicability of that law is the question in dispute. The Secretary of State is advised that the result of the appeal to the Judicial Committee would in no way affect the competence of the Special Commission to deal with the case, or the validity of its proceedings therein. I do not quite understand the meaning of the last paragraph of the Question; but, as Dinizulu will be tried last, his case cannot form a precedent for the cases of the other chiefs.

SWAZILAND.

MR. ALEXANDER M'ARTHUR, asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received information to the effect that the Governor of Natal, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, has rejected the offer of the King of Swaziland to place himself under British protection; and, whether Her Majesty's Government is aware of negotiations said to be in progress with a view to the annexation of that district by the South African Republic?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I do not understand what communication from the Governor of Natal to Chief Umbandine the hon. Member refers to; but Her Majesty's Government are precluded by the provisions of the London Convention of 1884 from declaring a protectorate over Swaziland, and they have no information of negotiations for the annexation of Swaziland to the South African Republic, which, they are advised, would be a breach of that Convention, although they have heard that the President expressed a wish to conclude a Treaty with Swaziland.

THE ROYAL BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the Report of Mr. Rogers Field on the sanitary condition of the Royal Barracks, Dublin, will be laid upon the Table of the House; and whether the result of the inspection of the Dublin Barracks by the Secretary of State, the Quartermaster General, and the Director General of the Army Medical Department will be communicated to the House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The first Report of Mr. Rogers Field on the drainage of the Royal Barracks will be laid on the Table immediately. In answer to the Question whether the result of my recent inspection of all the Dublin Barracks will be communicated to the House, I shall be glad to state, when opportunity occurs, the general objects we are aiming at.

THE NORTH BRITISH BORNEO COMPANY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any precedent for treating a British Company, administering territory under a Charter from the Crown, as "an independent State," as in case of the British North Borneo Company; whether the East India Company, or any other chartered Company, was ever recognized as "an independent State;" whether Article II. of the Agreement between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of Her Majesty, and the British North Borneo Company, limiting the right of Her Majesty's Government to interfere with the internal administrations of the North Borneo State, places any obstacle in the way of any interference which Parliament may at any time see fit to exercise; whether, in view of the protection afforded to the North Borneo State by Her Majesty's Military and Naval Forces, the Company is to pay anything; whether it is true that the Company lately enlisted 120 Sikhs or other Asiatic subjects of Her Majesty at Singapore in order to carry on hostilities against the Pangaran Shabandu; and, if so, whether such recruiting is subject

to any regulations either in India or in the Straits Settlements; and, whether the territory in which these hostilities are carried on, and which is now in the possession of a native chief, is among the territories recognized as belonging to the Company by Article I. of the Agreement?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): As regards the first two paragraphs of the Question, the hon. Member will find the precise status of the British North Borneo Company explained in the Parliamentary Paper, Spain No. 1 (1882), Borneo and Sulu, p. 202. The Company is not recognized as an "independent State," but as administering the Government of the independent State of Sabah, under powers and authorities derived from the Sultan of Sulu and the Sultan of Brunei, in consideration of an annual tribute. The Charter of the Company merely confers the ordinary incidents of incorporation, in return for which the Company have submitted to the control of Her Majesty's Government, in the exercise of the powers of government conferred on them by the Sultans. As regards the third paragraph, there is nothing in the Charter, or in the Agreement, between Her Majesty's Government and the Company there referred to which can interfere with any action which Parliament may see fit to take. As regards the fourth paragraph, the protection afforded to the Company does not differ in character from that which is extended to British life and property in all parts of the world, and the Company is not called upon to make any payment in respect of it. As regards the fifth paragraph, Her Majesty's Government have no information as to the enlistment of Sikhs and other Asiatic subjects of Her Majesty at Singapore, but recruiting is subject to regulations in India and in the Straits Settlements. As regards the sixth paragraph, the hostilities carried on by the Company against the Pangaran Shabandu are believed to have taken place on the border of the territory administered by them on the South West Coast (called Padas Damit), and to have arisen in consequence of raids, murders, and other acts of violence committed by the Pangeran in that territory.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Am I to understand that any papers have been presented to Parliament since the North Borneo Company were made an independent State?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The hon. Member will find in the papers an explanation of the *status* of the Company.

IRELAND—CAPTAIN SEAGRAVE, R.M.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Solicitor-General for Ireland whether any investigation has yet been made into the statements made in this House on the 19th December, 1888, by the hon. Member for Mid-Cork, respecting the arrest and dismissal from the Cape Mounted Infantry by the Government of Cape Colony of Captain Seagrave, R.M., for financial irregularities; and, if so, what has been the result of such investigation?

MR. MADDEN: The matter referred to is still under investigation, and a reply to a communication addressed to the Cape authorities on the subject is now awaited.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask how it is that two months have not been found long enough for an investigation of the case; and whether the Government will give an assurance that Captain Seagrave has not been allowed to try cases under the Crimes Act since December? Also, if he will give an assurance that this magistrate will not be allowed to try cases until the charges against him have been determined?

MR. MADDEN: The gentleman in question has not been exercising jurisdiction recently, but he has been allowed leave of absence while the investigation was proceeding. In respect of the investigation itself, not a moment of time has been lost; but the irregularities are alleged to have taken place in South Africa, and, therefore, it is obvious that some time must elapse before a decision can be arrived at?

MR. SEXTON: Will the leave of absence be allowed to terminate before a decision has been arrived at?

MR. MADDEN: I have nothing to add to my answer.

THE ACTION OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if his

attention has been called to a Resolution of the Select Vestry of the parish of St. Mary, Youghal, and the representatives of the Wesleyan Church, passed at a meeting held on the 18th February, protesting on the part of 600 Protestants of that parish against the action of the National League; whether he is aware that an attack has been made upon the Protestant community trading in Youghal, because they refused to put up their shutters every fair and market day, to express sympathy with Mr. William O'Brien, M.P.; and what steps are being taken to secure the protection of these Protestants?

MR. MADDEN: My attention has been called to the protest referred to, which is as follows:—

"We, the Select Vestry of Youghal, along with our Wesleyan brethren, representing over 600 Protestants of this parish, hereby enter our solemn protest against the unexampled tyranny whereby it is sought either to ruin our business people, or to coerce them into an expression of sympathy with a cause which is opposed to their conscientious convictions, and injurious, as they believe, to the general interests of the country. We entirely approve of the conduct of our brethren who, under these trying circumstances, refused to be forced into a line of conduct which they consider to be morally wrong. We call upon the friends of civil and religious liberty, both here and elsewhere, to support our brethren in every legitimate way in the unequal contest which is thus forced upon them, and to subcribe to a fund which is being raised to help any of them who may need assistance."

I may add that the police are using every effort to prevent intimidation, and will not fail to institute proceedings against any persons against whom evidence may be forthcoming.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Who are "we?"

MR. MADDEN: If the hon. and learned Gentleman will refer to the commencement of the protest he will see that "we" are the Select Vestry of Youghal, and the representatives of the Wesleyan Church.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who are they?

MR. MADDEN: If the hon. and learned Member will put a Question on the paper I will endeavour to answer it.

MR. JOHNSTON: The paper was signed by the chairman of the meeting of the Vestry, and the Wesleyan minister.

MR. MADDEN: I have no official information on the subject, but I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement of my hon. Friend.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. FIRTH (Dundee) (for Mr. ANDERSON, Elgin) asked the Lord Advocate if he could state when the Government proposed to introduce the Local Government (Scotland) Bill; will such Bill deal with the question of District Fishery Councils; if not, will the Government introduce a separate measure dealing with this question; and is it intended to introduce a Bill for the reconstitution of the Scotch Fishery Board as promised by the Government last Session?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I am unable to say when the Local Government Bill will be introduced. With regard to the second part of the Question, it is obviously impossible for me to say, at present, what the provisions of the Local Government Bill will be.

MILLBANK PENITENTIARY.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he intends to offer to sell to the County Council of London the site of Millbank Penitentiary, so that it may be secured for workmen's dwellings and open spaces connected therewith, in accordance with the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I offered the site of Millbank Penitentiary to the Metropolitan Board of Works on the 22nd of June last for the purpose of providing working class dwellings. The Board declined the offer. I intend, however, to renew the same offer to the County Council of London on the terms prescribed by the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885, from which I am not at liberty to depart. The County Council will not be in a position to consider this offer till the month of April.

THE OATHS ACT.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked the Attorney General whether on February 12th

Dr. Thomson, Borough Coroner, Oldham, refused to allow George Todd to affirm as a juror on an inquest, although George Todd stated that he had no religious belief; and, whether George Todd was a person entitled to affirm as a juror under the Oaths Act, 1888?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I am informed by the Borough Coroner that he overlooked the provisions of the Oaths Act, 1888, and, there being an ample attendance of jurors, thought it best not to require George Todd to serve. George Todd was a person entitled to affirm as a juror under the Oaths Act, 1888.

THE LAND PURCHASE ACT (IRELAND).

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury what are the total sums applied for and sanctioned as advances under the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts, 1885 and 1888, up to the 20th February, 1889?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The total sums applied for and sanctioned under the Purchase of Land Acts, 1885 and 1888, were £6,353,357 and £5,123,544 respectively to the 31st of January, 1889, the date of the last Return. A further Return to the date mentioned by the hon. Member could not be prepared without much inconvenience, having regard to the great pressure of work at present, and I hope, therefore, that the hon. Member will be content with the above figures.

A BEQUEST TO NOTTINGHAM.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to a memorial from the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Nottingham, relating to certain pictures formerly the property of H. B. Roberts of that town, who lately died intestate, leaving no relatives, and who had repeatedly expressed his intention to bequeath his pictures to the town of Nottingham; and, whether the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, having regard to the well-known intention of the late Mr. Roberts, will now direct that the pictures in question be handed over to the Mayor and Corporation for permanent exhibition in the Nottingham Musuem?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I have to inform the hon. Member that, with regard to the estate of the late Mr. H. B. Roberts, there are other claims to be considered besides that of the Corporation of Nottingham, and no decision as to the disposal of the pictures can be arrived at until the estate has been completely administered.

THE SALT TRUST.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked the First Lord of the Treasury if Her Majesty's Government had yet taken any steps to ascertain whether the great Salt Trust Company were or were not within the law in seeking to establish a combination monopoly of salt, and so to raise the price of that article; whether the large movements now in progress to raise the price of many articles of consumption by means of combinations for that purpose had received the attention of Her Majesty's Government; and whether they proposed to take any steps in the matter?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member may be in possession of information which the Government have not had before them. We are advised that there is nothing in the facts brought to the notice of the Government to bring the Salt Trust Company within the reach of the law. The Government have no sympathy, and, indeed, are strongly averse to the establishment of such monopolies as that which it is proposed to effect. I think, however, that the hon. Member may console himself with what I believe to be the fact, that there is absolutely no record of such a combination to raise the price of articles of consumption succeeds ing in the long run. There may be a temporary rise in the price of the article, but directly the pressure is felt fresh sources of supply are at once opened up, or new and economical methods of production, and such competition comes very rapidly in aid of the reduction or price which often falls to a figure lower than the articles previously obtained This applies especially to salt, the sources of the supply of which are practically unlimited.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I shall take the earliest opportunity of calling

attention to this subject, and of moving an Address to Her Majesty that the same principles with respect to combination may be applied to the rich as are now applied to the poor.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether the British Government has combined with other Governments in order to raise the price of sugar?

MR. W. H. SMITH: There is no foundation for that statement.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the attention of the Law Officers of the Crown has been drawn to a case in Lord Kenyon's Reports, in which the Lord Chief Justice treated a combination to raise the price of an article as a criminal offence?

MR. W. H. SMITH: So far as the information laid before the Government is concerned, they have come to the conclusion that there is no case for their interference. If the hon. Member is in possession of any information which would enable us to form a different judgment we would be exceedingly glad to receive it.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Have the Government instructed their Law Officers to look into the matter?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already stated that, so far as the information received goes, we are advised there is no ground upon which they could proceed against these parties. The Government would be glad if the hon. Member could furnish them with any further information in his possession.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I ask whether any inquiry has been made into the matter; and whether the Government have sought to obtain information?

MR. W. H. SMITH: We took all the steps in our power when the matter was referred to us, and we cannot find that there is any legal authority for interfering. The hon. Member may rely on competition to bring down the price of the article, and to effect a great and general reduction. It is impossible for any combination of this kind to last.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can assure the House that the "legislative provision" in regard to the sugar bounties will be of such a kind as will enable the House to consider the whole policy for the Convention into which Her Majesty has entered for the suppression of bounties?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I have no hesitation in assuring the right hon. Member that any legislative provision in regard to the sugar bounties which the Government may bring before the House will afford full opportunity for the consideration of the whole policy of the Convention.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF MEMBERS.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin, &c.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of Members of the House of Commons who have been prosecuted under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; what is the number of Members who have been convicted under the Act; and how many hon. Members are now in prison?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND: Prosecutions under the Statute mentioned have been instituted against 24 Members, of whom 23 have been convicted, and the other case is still pending. The number of hon. Members now in prison is three.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the circumstance that yesterday the visiting justices of Kilkenny Gaol made a report protesting in the strongest manner against the prison treatment of Mr. Carew, and requesting that his clothes may be restored to him; and whether the right hon. Gentleman proposes to take any action in the matter?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR): I have received no information on the subject. I have no doubt Mr. Carew will be dealt with in the ordinary course by the Prisons Board. That is all the information that has reached me.

PRIVILEGE.—STRANGERS IN THE LOBBY.

MR. SEXTON: I request to ask you, Sir, a Question relating to a matter of privilege. I desire to know whether you can inform the House by what right or authority a part of this building reserved to the use of Members of this

House is open to one Edward Caulfield Houston, a witness in a certain case; and whether steps can be taken to prevent Members of this House from being brought into contact with the authors of false and calumnious statements? I wish to know whether we cannot be protected from being exposed to the provocation of meeting this man in a part of the House reserved to the use of Members?

THE SPEAKER: I am not aware of the facts narrated by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. SEXTON: I will put a further question to-morrow.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Sir John George Smith Kinloch, baronet, for Perthshire (Eastern Division).

MOTIONS.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to amend the Law of Evidence in Criminal Cases, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Matthews, and Mr. Solicitor-General.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 96.]

OFFICIAL SECRETS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Attorney General, Bill to prevent the disclosure of Official documents and information, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, and Lord George Hamilton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 97.]

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask a Question concerning the Bill, and with regard to the scope of the Bill—namely, whether it will prevent the disclosure of documents and information in the possession of the Government to either of the litigants in any case in which a Law Officer of the Crown—the Attorney General—holds a brief for one of the parties.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: At the proper time I will make an explanation.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st February.]—[See page 41.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne) moved as an amendment to the Address the insertion of the following words:—

"But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the present system of administration in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust; that it violates the rights and alienates the affections of Your Majesty's Irish subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain. And we humbly represent to your Majesty that such measures of conciliation should be adopted as may bring about the contentment of the Irish people and establish a real union bhtween Great Britain and Ireland."

The right hon. Gentleman said—Mr. Speaker, my right hon. Friend the member for Mid Lothian remarked the other night that one reason, if there had been no other, why we should have been obliged to challenge this paragraph in the Address, was that the Government had taken a very unusual course in the wording of that paragraph. Instead of making it neutral in its expression, such as, according to my right hon. Friend's judgment, has always been the case hitherto, the Government have chosen to make that a paragraph to draw the whole House of Parliament on to express a satisfaction which we, at any rate, on this side of the House do not by any means entertain. But, even quite apart from the wording of this paragraph in the Address, I think it will be felt in all parts of the House that, with our views on this side, we should have been bound, in the light of recent contemporary incidents in Ireland, to call the attention of the House to what is now going on, and to ask the House seriously to consider whether it justifies or does not justify the description of "salutary results" as the outcome of the present policy of Her Majesty's Government. It is, I think, about eight months ago since I had the honour of submitting to the House a Motion which, though not quite identical in its wording, was no doubt identical in its purport and its drift with the present Motion. Nothing that has happened during those eight months has weakened the convictions of those of us who voted for that Motion that it was well-timed then, and nothing has happened which can weaken our convic-

tion that it is still more urgently called for now. Sir, the propositions in the Amendment that I have put upon the paper are, in effect, founded upon two allegations. The first is that the Administration in Ireland has during the last few months, and during the last two or three months more especially, been singularly wanting in that prudence, that foresight, and that care, which are the cardinal virtues of all administration, but which are particularly required in the administration of the exceptional and repressive law which you passed, and which you are carrying out, against the opinion of the country upon which you have imposed it. The second allegation is that in one case, at least, a piece of legal iniquity has been perpetrated which in my judgment is tainted by every bad quality that can mark a judicial act, and which is worthy of some of the worst exploits of that ruffian judge in Scotland 100 years ago, who said "Give me a prisoner and I will find you the law." The Chief Secretary the other day—not in this House, but elsewhere—said he was glad to inform his audience that the relations between the people and the police in Ireland were more satisfactory now than they had been for a very long time past. Now, I for one should always—whatever might be the condition of parties, and however wide our views of policy—be glad to hear that; because, whether the Chief Secretary is a Liberal, or a Tory, or a Nationalist, we must all feel that nothing is more essential for anything like peace and order in Ireland than that the relations between the guardians of order and the people at large should be tolerably pacific and tolerably harmonious. As far, however, as has transpired in the public prints during the last few months, I can find no trace of anything of that kind. Indeed, I find traces of a very lamentably contrary state of things. What happened at Gweedore? The murder at Gweedore is one of those matters as to which there can be no difference of opinion in any part of this House, and the House needs no assurance that we here deplore and condemn that murder exactly as much as I am sure the hon. Member for Belfast and the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh condemned the murder of the cooper in the streets of Belfast in 1886. But, in saying that, I cannot, nor does the country, I think, absolve the Government of gross carelessness and rashness in the way in which the arrest was carried out. Four or five constables were sent to arrest a popular priest in the presence of his flock at a moment when their feelings of attachment and reverence were naturally at their height. To do that was an act of rashness which has never been surpassed in police administration, and in this connection I will venture to use an illustration which I have used before. Supposing that when I was Chief Secretary it had been necessary to arrest Dr. Kane or Dr. Hanna, two popular divines in Belfast. If I had sent a small number of police to arrest either of those clergymen coming out of their places of worship in the presence of a great crowd of Orangemen, I am perfectly certain that the Members for North Armagh and Belfast would have come down to this House and moved a Vote of Censure on me, and they would have been right. But contrast this extraordinary carelessness with the precautions taken when removing Father M'Fadden to gaol. Then the authorities, who thought it sufficient to send a small body of police—I am aware there was a larger body in reserve—to arrest him—

> "Surrounded him with a heavy escort of the 60th Rifles and police, mounted and on foot. Carriages containing the police formed a line stretching 30 yards along the road. In front was a detachment of Royal Engineers to examine the bridges, while skirmishers went along the hills to prevent boulders being rolled down on the men below."

Surely this is very like a state of civil war. Contrast these precautions with the want of precaution shown at the beginning of this unfortunate catastrophe. I want to ask the House how they can have confidence in police administration which allows a handful of police to be brought into contact with mobs under such circumstances, and which affords such an exhibition of perversity and folly as was made on this occasion. And you will find that all over Ireland, except in the north-east corner, there are at this moment constant collisions, not always on a large scale, but irritating and vexatious, between the police and the people. Some of the cases are almost incredible. I admit that it is not very

easy to get accurate information as to what passes in Ireland. But at Tralee in February, on the occasion of Mr. O'Brien's removal, a number of men were brought up for cheering. One of them, for instance, was heard to cheer for Mr. O'Brien when being driven from the station. Will the House believe that for this offence, and this only, the prisoner was ordered to find bail, himself in £5, and two sureties in £2 each, or go to goal for a month? Another cried "Bravo, O'Brien." Mr. Roche, the magistrate, said the prisoner must clearly understand that conduct of this kind—cheering a prisoner while being conveyed to gaol—was illegal, and would not be tolerated. I submit to the House that that is not the law in England, and that no Home Secretary or magistrate would venture to act as if it were the law. Another case was brought up in connection with the same business, and the prisoner was charged with hissing Mr. Cecil Roche. He was bound over to the peace or three months in gaol. At Killarney, also connected with Mr. O'Brien, the crowd were treated with the greatest violence. Prisoners whose conduct appeared to be perfectly harmless were taken to the barracks, and some brought before the magistrates. At the platform where the train reverses there were about 40 boys collected, and while the train was reversing they raised a cheer. Colonel Turner from the carriage ordered the police to charge them. The police, using their rifles as clubs, most mercilessly used them. That was a sample of what was going on. Wherever they had the chance the police were ordered to behave in this brutal manner. There is one case in which I hope the Chief Secretary will give us further information, for the circumstances as stated are so extraordinary that I cannot believe it. But he, perhaps, can tell us whether it is true or not. Two young men were charged with obstructing a constable at Ennis on the 10th of February. The obstruction consisted in the defendants, while engaged in conversation, laughing at the constable. The defendants denied that they were laughing. The magistrate sentenced them to three months' each in default of finding bail for good behaviour.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What are you reading from?

MR. J. MORLEY: *The Freeman's Journal.* [*Ministerial laughter.*] If I read it from the *Times*, you would, I suppose, believe it. I said it was not easy to get accurate information from Ireland. The man who has the worst chance of getting accurate information as to what is going on, is the man who is dependent for his information on officials who are never in contact with the people. I say, Sir, this case may not be true, but it requires investigation. There are other cases, but I will push on to more important matters. There was in January a case where there was an extension of the law of riot and unlawful assembly of the most serious kind. Here two men were found guilty of unlawful assembly and imprisoned for one month, and the whole offence proved against them was that they were said to have been in a crowd, some members of which raised a cheer for the Plan of Campaign. If you are in a crowd which cheers for the Plan of Campaign, then you are guilty of an unlawful assembly. That is not the kind of justice which we desire to see administered in Ireland. It is that sort of thing which justifies me in saying that the present administration of the law in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust. I will now proceed to the sentences of Members of Parliament. I will begin with the most recent of them—the case of the hon. Member for North Kildare, Mr. Carew. I think, Mr. Speaker, as these gentlemen are excluded from this House, I may venture to call them by their names. Now, Sir, I am not going largely into the details of Mr. Carew's case. He stated himself before the magistrates the circumstances out which his arrest arose. Mr. Carew stated the facts as to the tenant O'Byrne, who had been evicted for arrears—arrears with which we have always said you ought to have dealt—and Mr. Carew said that under the circumstances he was bound, as representative of the county, to go over and expose what he considered was nothing better than an act of highway robbery. "I admit," he says, "that I said that." He further admitted that he said if any one was imported into the district such a person should be left severely alone—Boycotted. "If that was a crime," Mr. Carew said, "I admit it. If it be a crime to say that the tenants of Lord Drogheda are under no

obligation to provide amusement for Lord Drogheda, by allowing him to run over their land, then I admit I am a criminal to the fullest extent." Now, I am not discussing for a moment the point whether Mr. Carew's speech was legal or illegal. I will take it the magistrate was justified in finding that he had broken the law. But I ask the House to consider what a state of law you have got which enables the Marquess of Drogheda and his agent, and as many other people as like, to oppress the tenants under the screw of arrears of an excessive rent, and yet which does not allow the tenants to combine, and does not allow anyone to advise them to combine, under the penalty of being brought before a coercion magistrate, and being sentenced to four months' imprisonment. The Chief Secretary said on Friday night that there was no distinction between giving advice of this kind and shooting a land-grabber. I do not believe there is a man in the House who will say that Mr. Carew's offence is to be put on the same footing as a crime of violence. Then I come to the case of Mr. Finucane.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is under appeal.

MR. J. MORLEY: I am aware of that. I have not forgotten what the right hon. Gentleman said, and I am going strictly to confine myself to the coldest and baldest statement of the case. Mr. Finucane was charged with conspiracy and intimidation. He made a speech at Castleconnell on the 28th October, 1888, at which he denounced crime, but the Crown brought in evidence of another speech made on the 4th November, and afterwards his attendance at a meeting on the 19th May. At the meeting in May, language of extreme and indefensible violence was used by one of the speakers, but not by Mr. Finucane. The magistrates said—and with these words I will leave the case, but I am bound to refer to it because it is one of the illustrations of the proposition I wish the House to affirm, namely, that the administration of the law is not calculated to win the affection of the people of Ireland—the magistrates, in pronouncing sentence, said Mr. Finucane was at this meeting and he never opened his mouth to condemn such violent language, and the Court could come to no other conclusion than that Mr. Finucane lent the sanction of his presence and influence to the urging of this cruel system, and the bench therefore had no option but to find him guilty, and he would be sentenced to four months' imprisonment. Another participator in the meeting who had not been present at the meeting in May, was sentenced to one month's imprisonment. Therefore we may infer that the difference in the punishment was owing to Mr. Finucane not feeling disposed to protest against language used by another person at a previous meeting. Now, Sir, I come to what I consider by far the worst case of all that has happened in the administration of English law for a very long time past—I mean the case of Mr. E. Harrington. [An hon. MEMBER, "Infamous."]. Mr. Harrington was brought up on three charges. Of these one was dropped and another dismissed, and he was convicted and punished for the offence of publication. The charges were —first, being at an unlawful meeting; second, unlawful publication; third, incitement. He was not punished for being present at the meeting; he was not punished for the words used, for the magistrate said, though the language was strong, it was not guilty language; he was, therefore, punished solely and purely for the publication of the proceedings of a suppressed branch of the League, the meetings of which very branch he had for 12 months every week or fortnight reported in the same paper without a word of protest being raised on the part of the Crown. It is quite true that a year ago he had suffered one month's imprisonment for the offence of publication, but he had never desisted, and other proprietors of newspapers in other parts of Ireland went on publishing, and no notice was taken. Yet for doing what he had been doing for 12 months, and what all the other people had been for 12 months all over Ireland and are doing now, he is at this moment enduring the punishment of six months' imprisonment with hard labour. The Chief Secretary spoke the other night of the shocking crimes for which men are imprisoned under this Act—and six months' imprisonment is the severest punishment that can be inflicted under it. Will the right hon. Gentleman get up and say that this offence—the publication of pro-

ceedings of suppressed branches of the National League—deserves to be called a shocking crime and deserves to be punished by the punishment that is due to a shocking crime? If it is a shocking crime, why was not he proceeded against before? If it is a shocking crime, why are not others proceeded against? If it is a shocking crime, how was it the magistrate said if he would promise not to repeat it, he would let him off? Is there a Judge or a magistrate in England who, if he deemed an offence actually committed such as to deserve six months' imprisonment, would content himself with ordering the prisoner to be bound over to come up when called upon? The Chief Secretary will, no doubt, get up and say I am attacking the administration of the law. No, Sir, I am attacking the prostitution of the law. There is a circumstance about Mr. Harrington's case which I cannot entirely pass over. You show no quarter in imputing motives to Gentlemen below the Gangway. I do not know why they should show quarter to you. What may have been the motive of the authorities in this case? The Special Commission, which you invested with its powers with such exultation and triumph, although I suspect now you look at it with rather more mixed emotions—the Special Commission was sitting. Mr. Harrington was taking part with the counsel for what I may call the defendants, in that he was advising them with his local knowledge on the Kerry cases then before the Commission. Not only so, but in this speech —not the incriminating portion of it, but in what was, by far, the most important portion of it—he said—

"I have come down from London to Kerry to warn you men of Kerry that if you go into public-houses to take a drop of drink you had better be careful whom you talk to, because there are spies here who are collecting evidence against Kerry for the Special Commission. I advise you to be careful, and to be kind enough to help me and my brother with any proof that you can find that outrages have been due, in seven cases out of ten, to private disputes, and not to agrarian causes in their proper sense."

What authorities, with one spark of tact, with one spark of sense or of management, with one spark of common fairness, after allowing the practice, for which Mr. Harrington was punished, to go on for 12 months, would step forward and say, "We will stop this man; we will prevent his friends from having the benefit of his services; and we will deter the Kerry tenants from following the advice he very sensibly gives them." I now pass from the mode in which prisoners are made to the mode in which prisoners are treated. The Chief Secretary has made some very remarkable statements upon the nature of his own responsibility in this matter. He made a speech at Dublin last Saturday week—a speech, which I am bound to say, does more credit to his capacity for being merry under difficulties than it does to his right feeling. In that speech the Chief Secretary said, "The Prisons Board is not in my department;" and, in his letter to Mr. Armitage the right hon. Gentleman said, "I do not make the prison rules, and I do not administer them." [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!] The right hon. Gentleman cheers that statement. Well, I do not like to use the language he has introduced into political controversy, as, for example, when he says a statement of my right hon. Friend is "absolutely false." I prefer to stick to the old phrase and to say, "The right hon. Gentleman is greatly mistaken." The Prisons Act, 1877, says:—"The said Board shall, in the exercise of their powers and jurisdiction under this Act, conform to any directions which may from time to time be given to them by the Lord Lieutenant." Now, the Lord Lieutenant is, of course, the same thing for official purposes as the Chief Secretary. "The Board shall exercise their jurisdiction subject to such direction as they may receive from the Lord Lieutenant under the provisions of this Act as to the control and management of all prisons and prisoners therein." I am unable to construe the English language if that does not invest the Chief Secretary with full responsibility for prison treatment. What has struck me very much, and what I cannot understand, and what I hope the Chief Secretary will be able to explain, is how it is that, though in the Chief Secretary's opinion the state of Ireland is improving, the treatment of prisoners is becoming more severe, that proceedings against Members of Parliament are becoming more frequent, and that there is every appearance on the part of the Government of alarm and dismay rather than

of confidence and complacency? Now, I am going to refer to a matter to which I am almost ashamed to refer—but after all the shame is not ours, the shame is there (pointing to the Ministerial bench) —and that is the matter of hair cutting. This is a comparatively new device. I believe that the first prisoner who has been subjected to this operation is an hon. Friend now sitting below the Gangway, who was imprisoned in November. Mr. Wilfrid Blunt was not subjected to it, nor was my hon. Friend the Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and it was never resorted to till the case of my hon. Friend below the Gangway, next upon Mr. Harrington, and now upon Mr. O'Brien. It is not only new, but I submit it is a complete violation of the spirit of the prison rules. What is the prison rule? The prison rule is this—unless it has been altered quite recently:—"Each male prisoner shall have his beard clipped or shall be shaved at least once a week, unless specially exempted by the governor." Therefore the governor has a full right of exemption; but, more than that, "the prisoner's beard shall not be cut closer than may be necessary for the purpose of health or cleanliness." Then surely the Chief Secretary is responsible, and the spirit of this prison rule, which comes under the head, by the way, of "personal cleanliness," has been violated by this odious practice. I wonder the Chief Secretary does not reflect that it is these small indignities that sting most sharply—these stupid, useless humiliations. They may seem very slight for us to be talking about, but they are neither slight nor meaningless in the eyes of those of whom Mr. O'Brien is the very idol. What is the meaning, then, of Mr. O'Brien's resistance, and, I suppose, of Mr. Carew's resistance, if it be true he has resisted? I will tell you what the meaning is, and it is one with which I sympathize. It is a repudiation by the only means, so far as I know, in his power that the offence for which he has been punished was on the same level with, or of the same complexion as, many of the vile, selfish, or brutal offences of common ordinary criminals. My hon. Friend below the Gangway, when he was in prison, I believe, refused not to wear the prison garb, but to take exercise with criminals. I do not know if the House understands what that kind of thing means. I rather think that, in the case of the Member for Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond), he had to take his exercise with a couple of soldiers who had been guilty of an abominable kind of burglary. Would any of you (indicating the Members on the Ministerial side) consent to take your exercise—would the hon. Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), when his time comes, because he constantly says that in a certain event he will defy in arms the law, will he consent—I hope he will not—to take his exercise with ordinary and vile criminals?

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: Certainly I should.

*MR. JOHN MORLEY: Then all I have to say is that I hope I shall be in the House to protest against it. I desire now to make a few general remarks on prison treatment, but I want to begin by saying there is a precedent for the treatment, which, in my opinion, is due to men committed under this Act so long as their offences are confined to incitement by writing or speech. For a precedent I should look into the General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877. According to a well-known section of that Act, every prisoner convicted of sedition or seditious libel is directed to be treated as a misdemeanant of the first division. Now, what is sedition? Sedition is defined as "consisting of practices, whether by deed or writing, which have for their object to excite discontent or dissatisfaction, to create public disturbance, or lead to civil war, to bring into hatred or contempt the Sovereign or the Government, the laws or Constitution of the Realm, and generally all endeavours to promote public disorder." Now, will anybody in the House say that offences of this magnitude do not lead to far more widespread peril than can possibly come from incitement to boycotting? I am not defending boycotting or incitement to boycotting, but I ask can it be contended the Acts treated as sedition in their definition are not far more serious to the public peace than the incitement to boycotting? Why should not offenders whose offences under the Crimes Act consist of writing and speech be treated as misdemeanants of the first division? Remember that the protection of a jury is withdrawn, and mark this—that two County Court

Judges in four cases have ordered prisoners under this Act to be treated as first-class misdemeanants, and I believe the Resident Magistrates have it fully in their power to do the same. But why are there only four cases in the long record? The answer is quite simple. It is because the Chief Secretary himself, in every speech he ever makes on this subject—I do not say he intends to do it—but the effect is to give his Resident Magistrates and the County Court Judges the cue. The right hon. Gentleman seems impatient at that remark, but it is a perfectly true one. Does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that a Minister in his great position and of his great authority can assure this House and great audiences in the country that there is no distinction between a criminal under this Act and a criminal under any other Act without that having weight with magistrates and County Court Judges? He must be held responsible. But let me say another word in the case of Mr. O'Brien. The Chief Secretary thought that some of us did not properly describe to the public what Mr. O'Brien's offence was. He will presently say that Mr. O'Brien's offence was one of the utmost gravity, because it was a serious incitement to boycott in a neighbourhood where there were evicted farms. Mr. O'Brien's words—and I have never attempted to shirk this—were these—

"I am afraid land-grabbers are living and thriving in the midst of you. If all our labours for the last ten years have not been in vain, you ought to know how to deal with a land-grabber."

Those were the words quoted by the Chief Secretary as being the most important. Now, what did the Chief Secretary say?—

"If we had passed over those words so serious and so guilty we should have been making ourselves, and the Government would have been making itself accessory to assassination."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

*MR. JOHN MORLEY: He abides by that. Accessory to assassination! Mark this. This guilty speech was made in September, and Mr. O'Brien was brought to justice in January. Therefore, for four months you were accessory to assassination. On Friday night the right hon. Gentleman said, in reference to Mr. Carew's case:—

"I will not draw a distinction in practice between a man who shoots a land-grabber and a man who deliberately makes speeches having distinct reference to taking evicted farms in the neighbourhood where he speaks."

He says he admits no distinction in practice.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

*MR. JOHN MORLEY: You say you admit no distinction in practice; but you do. Do you mean to tell me that if you found a man shooting a land-grabber you would let him remain for four months without arrest? I know what the right hon. Gentleman will say. ["Oh!"] Mr. O'Brien was punished at this time, no doubt, for inciting to boycotting, but he was afterwards punished for the Plan of Campaign. But is advocating the Plan of Campaign as bad as shooting a land-grabber? I should be surprised to hear that, because for advocating the Plan of Campaign Mr. O'Brien got the other day at Tralee six months only, without hard labour, on account of his health; but Mr. Carew's offence, which the right hon. Gentleman thought ought to be treated like shooting a land-grabber, only received four months' imprisonment. Therefore, the law, at all events, treats these two offences in a way which shows that all this talk of putting offences of this kind on a footing with crime like murder is really idle and ridiculous and shameful talk. The Chief Secretary pretends—and I do not think it is a pretension he ought to lay so much stress upon; I do not think it is manly to lay stress upon it—that it was by pleading ill-health that Mr. O'Brien got more relaxation than any other class of prisoner. The truth is, it is the right hon. Gentleman who seeks refuge behind doctors' certificates. [MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.] Yes; and that was the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman's despatch of Dr. O'Farrell to Clonmel; and the right hon. Gentleman said so practically. He said he did not send Dr. O'Farrell from motives of humanity or from apprehensions of Mr. O'Brien's health, but lest anything should happen to injure the Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, no! I am not aware of having used those words.

*MR. JOHN MORLEY: I quote from the *Times*, and here it is—

"I do not think we ought to permit Mr. O'Brien to ruin his constitution for the purpose of injuring Her Majesty's Government."

It is because you did not think Her

Majesty's Government ought to be injured that you sent down Dr. O'Farrell. I do not profess to be so subtle a logician as the right hon. Gentleman, but I don't believe that will hold water. Now, Sir, I pass on to another class of inconsistencies of the right hon. Gentleman. He said on Friday night—

"Every man, so far as I am concerned, who may be imprisoned in Ireland under the law prevailing in Ireland shall be treated as an ordinary prisoner. Any relaxation of the rules must be made, in my opinion, on the authority of the medical officer of the prison."

That is not in the least correct. A relaxation of the rules has been made in the case of priests by the right hon. Gentleman on his own authority. The right hon. Gentleman said, on the 26th of June last year—

"I decided that priests should be subjected to the same treatment as the other prisoners. In the matter of dress alone I would make a distinction."

Even that is not correct. It is not in the matter of dress alone that the right hon. Gentleman has made a distinction. Will the right hon. Gentleman tell me that in one single instance a priest has been ordered to clean out his cell? Not in one single instance. We know that the Canon Law which he pleaded prescribes rules *de habitu clericali*, but I am not aware that it lays down any rule *de cellis purificandis*. Now, do we blame the right hon. Gentleman for extending special treatment to the priests? Not at all; on the contrary, we all thoroughly applaud and approve of it. Even the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), I believe, approves it. The essential point is this—that the Catholic Church is an entirely voluntary association, and that its disciplinary regulations are of no avail whatever, as the right hon. Gentleman well knows, against the law of the land. That is perfectly clear. Why, then, does he make these exemptions in favour of the Catholic clergy? By making them he admits the existence of the dispensing power, and thus makes himself responsible in every case. But why does he exercise it in the case of the priests? Because to carry out this system of odious humiliation upon the clergy of the Catholic Church, would be to wound and insult the popular sentiment. This is the basis of the exemption, and a perfectly adequate and satisfactory basis it is. Why, then, does he not extend it? If this humiliating treatment of popular Representatives wounds the popular sentiment, why should it not be regarded as a basis for the exceptional treatment of the Representatives of the people? I do not want to go into any metaphysical distinctions as to what punishment is or ought to be, or to discuss whether, as the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) says, degradation depends upon the offence. All that I regard as idle. But I do insist that the Chief Secretary has a discretion, and if he asks me for a guide in the use of that discretion, I would say that, not speaking of a distant planet—not speaking of England or Scotland, but of a country like Ireland—I would say, let him ask himself this question—"What will be the effect of the treatment I am going to inflict, upon the public opinion of the country whose affairs I am administering? Is this harsh, this stupid infliction of personal indignities calculated to lessen the difficulties of government, or to revolt opinion and to sow the seeds of bitter hatred?" If my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) were here, I should read a paragraph from Bentham on this matter which would meet an argument of his. But perhaps the House will not object to hear a very few lines from that very wise man upon the infliction of ignominious punishment. He says—

"The infliction of ignominious punishments is an appeal to the tribunal of the public—an invitation to the people to treat the offender with contempt, to withdraw from him their esteem. It is a bill drawn upon the people for so much of their ill-will as they shall think proper to bestow. If they look upon him in a less favourable light than they would otherwise, the draft is honoured; if they do not it is protested, and the charge is very apt to fall upon the drawer. Ignominious punishments are like those engines which are apt to recoil and wound the hand that unadroitly uses them."

Are these prisoners regarded with moral reprobation in consequence of these humiliating punishments? What did the right hon. Gentleman say in his speech in Dublin? He did not say that the Irish Leaders, these men who are being sent one after another to prison, are paid agitators—he did not say that they are a "a kept party." No, Sir; the Chief Secretary has seen

some things in the country, at all events, as they are. He said that the Irish Members of Parliament boasted —these are his words—that—

"They had a majority of their countrymen with them. They are leaders whom their countrymen are content constantly to follow. They wield a mighty influence."

Now, in all seriousness, what do you gain by trying to wound the self-respect of men in such a position? You say they wield a mighty influence, and that they are the real leaders of their countrymen. Surely it is our business to raise their self-respect, and to treat them both in this House and within the doors of the prison as well as you can, and not as ill as you can. There is Mr. Harrington, who, on the occasion of his former imprisonment, was sent out among his own constituents to give evidence in a Court of Justice in a prison dress. Yet the other day, when they brought Delaney, the murderer, over here to give evidence, he was brought up in private clothes. Ah! but there is a great difference in the two cases. Delaney was brought up in England; Mr. Harrington was only brought up in Ireland. Sir, it is this kind of proceeding, the infliction of these small, irritating indignities, is the method by which in the past, as all who know Fenian history are aware, you manufactured rebels, and you are going the right way about manufacturing rebels in the future by all this vexatious, unworthy, unmanly treatment. As I quoted one philosopher, I will quote another, who ascended as far into the heights of political wisdom as, I am sorry to say, the right hon. Gentleman has gone down into the depths of political unwisdom. He says that it is the duty of a ruler not to provoke beyond the necessities of the case; not to leave stings in men's minds which must rankle after the appearances of tranquillity are restored. My charge is that the Chief Secretary has systematically provoked, and is provoking, beyond the necessities of the case. The other propositions of my Amendment do not call for many words from me; but I do ask the House to bear with me a little while longer while I speak rather more generally. The dissatisfaction with which your opponents regard the present harsh, oppressive, and unjust administration in Ireland is almost matched by the impatience of your own friends. These scenes are not what the Unionists bargained for; and it is not only in England that there is great impatience, even on your own side. I should like to read a passage from a newspaper in Belfast, one of the strongest and most earnest supporters of the Government in a quarter where they have not very many, but in which they have the greatest body of supporters. This is a very able journal, very hostile to Home Rule, and very fervent for the Union. What did it say last Thursday?—

"It has been our duty to defend Mr. Balfour from the very unjust attacks of which he has been the object on the part of the Irish Nationalist Press. But we may state candidly that we believe a great many people who are not unfriendly to the Irish Chief Secretary think he is not so well served by his subordinates in Dublin Castle as he ought to be. They get him into all kinds of difficulties which might, with a little temper and management, very easily be avoided. In administering such a measure as the Crimes Act, as little as possible ought to be left to the discretion of subordinates. When Lord Spencer was Lord Lieutenant, he carefully superintended the working of the whole administrative machinery of Dublin Castle. Now, in everything done in giving effect to the present Crimes Act, there appears to be no effort made to prevent needless friction, or, we may say, needless irritation. The Irish police are an excellent body of men, of whom the country may well be proud. But we may, however, say that their system is not very elastic; it is rough and ready. Mr. Balfour may not be directly responsible for this; but he ought to see it, and do what he can to prevent it. Some persons are very seriously to blame. If they really wished to discredit the coercive system by making it appear to ignorant and prejudiced people as odious as possible, they could scarcely act otherwise than they do. It is the cause of the Union which is thus brought into obloquy, and which is thus misrepresented to the humbler classes, who have only recently been enfranchised. Some of the errors committed by the Castle officials, or those who are presumed to be under their control, seem so extraordinary that it is difficult to believe they could be the effect of mere wrong-headedness or imbecility. We are sometimes almost inclined to suspect that there must be treachery, and that Mr. Balfour is not receiving fair play from some of his official subordinates."

The writer goes on to strengthen his case, and he finds the stupidity, want of tact, and want of management in the Executive authority so astounding that he can only account for it on the hypothesis that Mr. Balfour has traitors in Dublin Castle.

MR. JOHNSTON: What paper is the right hon. Gentleman quoting from?

*MR. JOHN MORLEY: The *Northern Whig* of last Thursday. That is a piece of very impartial and good evidence in favour of my Amendment. You are reducing Irish Government to a mockery and a farce. There never was a time when so many Irish Members of Parliament were in prison. You have got away Mr. O'Brien for six months; you have so disabled the hon. Member for Mayo that he will have to be away for some months. And you have tried another move—you have tried a more serious stroke—you hoped you were going to destroy their Leader. I am not sure their Leader will not destroy you. There never was a time when any Government—not a military despotism, not a Government by right of conquest—was so eager to take every opportunity in every direction, of openly, ostentatiously, and defiantly exhibiting their contempt, not merely for the legal rights of the people of Ireland, but for all their most honourable sympathies, feelings, and affections. We are told there is a policy of conciliation, and it is to be looked for in a development of material resources. The Chief Secretary is to come bearing balm upon his healing wings in the shape of a Drainage Bill. He is going to minister to a mind diseased by light railways. What position will this Parliament be in when you have got rid of a section of important Irishmen for criticizing, for supervising, for sanctioning these measures, which, more than all others, particularly demand special local Irish knowledge? The tide of opinion—you must know it—against the inanity of one part of your policy, meeting the tide of feeling against the barbarity of another part of your policy—the confluence of these tides is rising and will sweep you away. Sir, I am not fond of holding the opinion of the constituencies *in terrorem* over a lawfully constituted Parliament. I know it is the duty of a lawfully constituted Parliament honestly, courageously, and independently to shape its course, and not to waver because there may be transient changes in the current of public opinion. But it would be very wonderful if this change were transient, unless the people of England and Scotland have completely changed all their habits of thought and feelings which have made their country what it is. But, although I hold this view, there are peculiar circumstances in the present Parliament. Yes, the history of your Parliamentary majority is one long fraud upon the constituencies. There is not one in ten of you, on both sides of the House, who did not at the elections repudiate coercion. There is not one in 50 of you who did not promise local government extension in Ireland. What has become of your promise of local government? The hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Colomb) who seconded the Address said what you all say—the time is not opportune; the country is not quiet. That is a very remarkable argument, because the Chief Secretary for Ireland is presently going to tell us that outrages have gone down from 1,100 in 1886 to 660 in 1888; that boycotting has gone down 75 per cent. If in 1886 Ireland was quiet enough to have local government promised to it, why on earth is it not quiet enough now? I hope my hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), who said in the House, if not out of it, that he will never stand indefinite postponement of local self-government—[MR. COURTNEY: Hear, hear!] I am glad that he cheers—I hope he will ask the Government why they do not fulfil the promises he and others made on their behalf. The President of the Board of Trade (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), whom I do not see in his place, spoke very strongly on the necessity of giving Ireland an extension of local government, if it is quiet. If it is not quiet enough, and you do not think it is quiet enough, what does that show? It shows that you do not in your hearts believe in your own salutary results; it shows that you do not believe your own figures; that you do not accept the very tests of returning order which you try to press upon the House. Well, how long is this farce of Parliamentary misrepresentation to go on? Is this the best, after three years, that you are capable of doing for Ireland? Is this all you can do towards the solution of the Irish question? Are we for three or four years more to endure the scandal and disgrace of scenes which your own friends condemn—the scandal and disgrace of a policy which is founded in error, which is persisted in with a blind obstinacy to

the lessons of experience, and which is carried on from day to day with a flagrant disregard of forethought, common sense, and policy? No, Sir, I do not think we are; I think the time is swiftly coming, I think the hour is almost now on the point of striking, when an irresistible voice will come up from the nation in the words of a great statesman of the last century, in a resolution to pray Her Majesty that she will be graciously pleased again to recur to the sense of her people, and to let her people decide the great issues, great for the peace of Ireland, great for the honour of England, which divide you from us. Mr. Speaker, there is one word more before I sit down which I feel bound to say. There is one chapter in the history of the administration during the last three or four months into which we shall, when the proper time comes—and I have no intention of anticipating that time—have to make a sharp and searching inquisition. We shall want to know whether it is true, and if it be true, on what principle it is, that officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary in receipt of public pay, have acted as collectors of evidence in the interests of one party in a great process now going on. We shall want to know whether it is true that Resident Magistrates in receipt of public pay assisted, or were present, at the taking of evidence in this great process, either in Ireland or in London. We shall want to know whether any one in the position of a Crown Solicitor has acted as a paid agent in an inquiry relating to crime in his own county, and whether such action is compatible with his position. We shall want to know whether Government officials have handed over secret and important documents, the property of the Government, to enable individuals to make a case against certain persons. We shall want to know all these things, and all else that you have done in furtherance of what may prove to have been a fabric of imposture and of plot, of which you have infatuatedly made yourselves the dupes and the accessories. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

In paragraph 8, line 4, to leave out all the words after the word "Country," to the end of the paragraph, in order to insert the words,

"But we humbly present to your Majesty that the present system of administration in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust: that it violates the rights and alienates the affections of your Majesty's Irish subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain.

And we humbly represent to your Majesty that such measures of conciliation should be adopted as may bring about the contentment of the Irish people, and establish a real union between Great Britain and Ireland.—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down certainly did not require to make apologies to the House for this Motion. If we consider the attitude which the Opposition have taken up during the last three weeks of the Recess, if we consider the speeches they have made, and the accusations they have hurled against the Irish Government—accusations to the savage bitterness of which I think you will search in vain through history to find a parallel—we shall be of opinion that had they had not taken the earliest opportunity of bringing these charges against the Government in the House, where they can be replied to face to face, they would have shown themselves utterly unworthy of their Parliamentary position. I am therefore not surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have brought forward this Motion, but I am surprised at something that he has put into the speech, and at something that he has kept out of the speech. I am surprised that he in the last few words of his peroration should have taken advantage of his position, and urged charges against the Government at a time when he knew that his words would pass current in the country, but that we could not by any possibility take up the challenge which he threw down. I am surprised at the right hon. Gentleman's having alluded to that question at all, but I am still more surprised that he has omitted to allude to another part of the controversy which has raged during the Recess. Why, Sir, the party whom on this oc-

casion he represents have filled my waste paper basket day after day with resolutions embodying the most horrible charges against me and against my colleagues—charges of cruelty, charges of brutality, charges of cynical savageness. Yes, Sir, these charges were made in the Recess, and they are cheered now. Why were they not made by the right hon. Gentleman in his speech? [An hon. MEMBER: They were!] Why was there not one word about these imaginary horrors alleged to have taken place in connection with the prison treatment of Mr. O'Brien? Why, Sir, because it has begun slowly to dawn upon the right hon. Gentleman that he and his Friends have either been dupers or been duped, and that the stories to which they have been giving currency—calumnious stories against prison officials and against the Government—have absolutely no foundation in fact. ["Oh, oh!"] [An hon. MEMBER: You shall have them yet.] An hon. Gentleman says we shall have them yet.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: Yes, certainly.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Quite so; you put up your leader upon Irish questions to state the indictment against the Government; then the Chief Secretary, the man implicated, follows him, but you wait to make the gravest of your charges until he sat down and has no further power of reply. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman began his speech by discussing certain matters, all, I think, the House will admit rather unimportant compared with the great issue which is before us, and with which I shall deal with great brevity. He read out an article from a newspaper called the *Northern Whig*, which appeared to accuse the Government of errors in its administration, and the right hon. Gentleman himself has brought forward one case which he considers a gross error committed by the Government—an error so gross that practically they ought to be made responsible for it. From the extracts which the right hon. Gentleman was good enough to hand me across the table, I could not see what it was precisely to which the *Northern Whig* alluded, but I gather that the blunders alleged against the Government have been in the methods by which the arrest has been made of certain Members of this House n England and Scotland. Now, Sir, I take this opportunity of saying that that has nothing whatever to do with the Irish Government. I have no control over the matter at all. If there had been blunders, a point on which I offer no opinion as matter of law it rests with the local police to carry out the arrest at such time, at such place, and in such manner as they think fit; and the Irish Government and the Irish Constabulary are not responsible for it. Of course, with regard to the melancholy and tragical circumstance connected with Father M'Fadden, the case is different. Unquestionably there was an error committed by the officer on the spot, an error of judgment. Nobody doubts that; but for the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Central Government were responsible for that is surely very harsh. If we had not provided sufficient police, if we had not given adequate support to the officer charged with the duty of arresting Father M'Fadden, of course we should have been to blame; but the error was not that at all; the error was simply an error of strategy; an error of tactics committed on the spot—namely, that the large body of police who were there—an adequate body of police—were not close enough to the chapel where the arrest was taking place, and they could not therefore arrive in time to save the life of Inspector Martin, and drive back the cowardly mob which did him to death. Well, then, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman talked of the legal iniquities that are being perpetrated in Ireland, and he said that the motto of a Scotch Judge might be applied to the Resident Magistrates—"Bring me a prisoner, and I will find you the law." A grosser calumny upon a deserving body of men ["Deserving of what?"] who carry out duties of unexampled difficulty amid circumstances made unnecessarily difficult for them partly by the action of the right hon. Gentleman himself, has never been made. I think, without any long discussion, I can bring home to the minds of all who hear me in a very striking manner what kind of truth there is in these allegations, so constantly levelled, not, after all, only against Resident Magistrates, but against the County Court Judges, who have nothing whatever to do with the Executive Government. Now, Sir, a counsel who was in

Court the other day informs me, and, I have no doubt, informs me correctly, that the Chief Baron, whose authority in such matters the right hon. Gentleman will be the last to dispute, used these words in delivering a charge:—"If," said Chief Baron Palles, "a comparison was made between the number of cases where the judgments of the Judges of the Superior Courts were set aside *in banc* and the cases in which the decisions of the magistrates are reversed, the comparison would be most favourable to the magistrates." And I am also informed that Baron Dowse on the same occasion said:—"I must say that the judgments of the magistrates are submitted to the severest criticism and with no predilection in their favour." But that is not all. I have given you the opinion of a most competent authority.

MR. R. T. REID: Will the right hon. Gentleman give us the name of the counsel?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. If the accuracy is disputed, the hon. Member may charge me with inaccuracy if he pleases. Having given to the House the opinion of a most competent authority, will they allow me to give them certain figures which, I think, bring out the facts stated by Chief Baron Palles in a most striking manner? Under the ordinary law, as distinguished from the Crimes Act, I find the percentage of reversals of the total number of cases brought up on appeal is 26½, and under the Crimes Act only eight; and when the right hon. Gentleman tells the House that the motto for these Resident Magistrates is, "Find me the prisoner and I will find you the law," I further call his attention to this fact, that 66 per cent. of the persons tried before the Resident Magistrates were convicted, while the percentage of convictions before juries in the same year was 71. So much for the last shape in which criticism of the Resident Magistrates is presented to us. Now I will pass to that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech in which he dealt with the question of prison treatment. I will later on deal with that part of his case in which he dealt with the method, as he said, by which prisoners have been produced. These are two altogether different questions—absolutely different questions—rather mixed up in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, wholly mixed up, as far as I can make out, in ordinary popular discussion. But there are two branches of this question of prison treatment which we ought carefully to distinguish. The first is, what are the actual prison rules, and, secondly, ought Members of this House, and others brought up under the Crimes Act to be treated according to those rules? I hope the House will understand that that distinction ought to be kept in view by any man who desires to have a perfectly clear view of this case. The right hon. Gentleman has, I think, again in this House, as he did in the country, entirely misled his audience as to my relation with the Prisons Board. I stated—and I am perfectly ready to state again—that the management of prisons in Ireland is not in my department; and no more it is. What is known as the Chief Secretary's Department is a perfectly definite official organization. I am not dealing with technicalities at all. The essential difference is this—anything which is in my department I am directly responsible for. It comes before me in ordinary course, and my signature is required before any matter can be carried out. It is carried out by a staff in the Chief Secretary's Department. The Prisons Board bears precisely the same relation to the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary, who advises the Lord Lieutenant, as the Prisons Board in England bears to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, and that relation is not the relation of a department to its chief. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian expresses every sign of disgust and disapprobation at that statement.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: No, he did not; I did.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am alluding to the Member for Mid Lothian, whom I saw express signs of disgust and disapprobation.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I never did.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, these two gentlemen differ.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I said it was not my right hon. Friend, but I who denied the proposition.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That does not alter the expression of disgust. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian agrees with

me and disagrees with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. And this seems the more probable when I recollect the statement made by the Member for Mid Lothian himself only last summer. At that time it was the cue of hon. Gentlemen opposite to say that I had everything to do with the prisons, in order that they might prove that I was responsible for the death of Mr. Mandeville. When they were in that frame of mind, what said the Member for Mid Lothian? "Who are the Prisons Board in Ireland? The Executive Government. I do not believe it is so in England, and I hope not, and I believe not." Now, apparently, contrary to the belief of the right hon. Gentlemen on his right and left hand, it turns out that this state of things which the right hon. Gentleman did not believe, or, if it existed, would deplore, is, according to the last liberal doctrine, not only the actual state of things in Ireland but in England also. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian is right, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby is wrong. I have taken the pains to go into it. The interpretation which I understand is received at the Home Office in England is that the Home Secretary has no direct control over the destiny of prisoners. It is his business, no doubt, in conjunction with Parliament, to frame laws for prison discipline; but it is not the business of the Home Secretary nor of his department to control the separate destinies of individual prisoners. I have never denied that I have relations with the Prisons Board. Of course not. I have not only denied it, but I have proclaimed it on the house-top. I have not, however, that control over individual prisoners which Members opposite would attribute to me.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Who is the supreme prison authority?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then comes down the right hon. Gentleman, and, not for the first time, says, "How comes it, then, that you have relaxed the rules in favour of priests?" I have never concealed from the House that it was, in my opinion, a doubtful point whether that relaxation was not a straining of the Act. I have said so before, and I am perfectly ready to say so again. But I have made inquiry, and I find that in England precisely the same kind of relaxation is made when questions of religious feeling or religious prejudice come into account. I find, for example, in England there have been regulations made and acted upon by which Jews have certain privileges as regards food prescribed by the Jewish creed. I also find that, as far as possible, the prejudices of Hindoos with regard to caste are respected in English prisons. I maintain, therefore, that in making the relaxation to which I have alluded I have—unconsciously, I admit—followed the analogy of the English practice. How is that case to be distinguished from the action which right hon. Gentlemen desire me to take in dealing with the particular destinies of individual prisoners in the way of relaxation of prison rules? I maintain that the two cases are absolutely different. In one case I deal with a perfectly defined class. I deal with that class not by way of making their punishment less than that of their fellows, but by making that punishment equal, because I hold—and I am sure the House will agree with me—that it is an additional punishment to compel a priest to do that which the rules of the Roman Catholic Church either forbid or discourage him from doing. You will observe that there are two wide distinctions between the action I have taken and the action I am asked to take. On these two distinctions I have partly based—though I have another and stronger reason to give—my justification for what I have done, and my justification for refusing to do what I have been asked to do. There is this further reason—the right hon. Gentleman twitted me with considering Irish prejudices in what I did.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Irish sentiment.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Irish sentiment is making the relaxation in favour of priests. Properly stated, I have no objection to that indictment. The House is aware that, speaking broadly, we may say that every member of the disestablished Church in Ireland, every member of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, every member of the Wesleyan body, and every Quaker is a man not only attached to the Union between Ireland and this country, but who fervently approves the administration of the Crimes Act as carried on in that country. I

admit it is true, that almost every leading Roman Catholic of position, whether at the Bar or on the Bench—well, I do not know about the Bench—whether in commerce, or in whatever line of life he may be—almost every leading Roman Catholic also shares the same view—but, nevertheless, the fact remains that undoubtedly the great mass of support which the Government receive in Ireland is Protestant. Was there not, under these circumstances, great danger that the issues we were fighting in Ireland—the issue between law and disorder—would be confounded with those ancient and perennial religious quarrels which have added so much to the unhappiness of a country whose political history has been far from fortunate? Was not that a reason, in addition to all other reasons, why I should take every pains in my power to make it clear to every Roman Catholic in Ireland and out of it, that, while I was determined, irrespective of creed or station, to enforce the law, I was most anxious in every respect to consider the legitimate feelings of the Roman Catholic priesthood? Then the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to make some observations upon the subject of hair-cutting in gaol, and he appears to assume that the practice of clipping hair began for the first time last October. That I believe to be an absolutely unfounded statement. A question has been put down on the Paper on this subject, but postponed, for I have not yet been able to get the information from Ireland, but if my recollection serves me right, as I think it does, no man has been excepted.

MR. JOHN DILLON: I can correct the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. BALFOUR: Will the hon. Member allow me—except on a doctor's certificate. Speaking from recollection, that was so in the case of the hon. Member for East Mayo, and in the case of Mr. Blunt.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman be kind enough to state the nature of the disease which prevented my hair being cut?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My recollection of the diseases of the hon. Member is not very complete, although I have read a great deal about them. I think hon. Gentlemen are a little unreasonable. If I am asked a question I may be permitted to answer it. There is no doubt—there never has been any doubt—that the hon. Member for East Mayo is a gentleman of delicate constitution. He was in hospital during the whole time of his confinement in gaol, and naturally, under these circumstances, I had to read various reports concerning the state of his health. I have said nothing offensive either to him or to the House. I feel sure the hon. Member will accept my assurance that nothing personal to him was meant. But to continue my argument. Now the right hon. Gentleman appears to think that this is a specially Irish form of brutality in prison treatment. But there is the case of the Member for N.W.Lanark (Mr. C. Graham), and if any man in England was sent to prison for a political offence—assuredly he was. He had his hair cut, he had to sleep on a plank bed, he had to put on the prison dress, and yet without protest, without agitation, he went all through that so-called degrading punishment which now moves hon. Gentlemen to horror and tears.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He was convicted by a jury of his own country.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The distinction, therefore, of the learned Gentleman is this—a man convicted by a jury may have these indignities placed on him, but a man who is not so convicted may not. There is an end of your prison case if that is your argument. I do not think I need go further into that question at the present moment. I have fully dealt with every point brought forward, but if hon. Gentlemen are anxious for me to say more, do not them suppose that I have not a great deal more to say. I said to the House on Friday night that the fears of the Member for Cork that no Irish Nationalist would henceforth condescend to take advantage of a doctor's certificate were wholly unfounded. I stated that the statistics I had collected proved that there had been a great deal more relaxation in the case of persons committed under the Crimes Act than in the case of persons committed under the ordinary law. According to the statistics for last month, the percentage is 4 per cent in cases of ordinary crime and 18 per cent in cases under the Crimes Act. The right hon. Gentleman then replies: "You are sheltering yourself under doctors' certificates." "You employ your doctors to alter

those rules by a side wind which you refuse to alter by a direct exercise of authority." That is his criticism. But how does that consist with the charges daily brought against me by the right hon. Gentleman's friends that I desire to murder my political opponents? [Choose which branch of the charge you like to make, but do not make both. Do not at once say, "You are using prison doctors for the purpose of slaughtering your opponents," and at the same time say, "You are exercising illegitimate pressure upon your prison doctors in order to make your path in the House of Commons easier." Even more striking than the case of the ordinary Crimes Act prisoners is the case of the five gentlemen who have been put into prison in connection with the recent efforts to stir up disorder in Kerry. Of the five, I find that only one has taken his prison treatment in the ordinary way. The other four, although they have all shown great energy in carrying out the agitation, have acted differently.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Give the names, and then there will be no mistake.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Member for West Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington). He was not put in prison because the doctor said it would endanger his life. He had been working with great energy, and had shown no signs of weakness. [An Irish MEMBER: What do you insinuate?] I am making no accusation against him. Then, Sir, there is the Member for North-East Cork, whose case we all know about. Then there is the case of a Mr. O'Connor—not a Member of this House—who was discovered to be epileptic, and he had to be discharged on that account. Then there is the case of the Member for East Limerick (Mr. Finucane.) He was put in hospital the first day of his arrival. That accounts for four out of the five whose lives I am accused of trying to take. Now I want to know what justification there is for accusing me of cynical brutality in the treatment of these men? I am not going to argue the case whether they ought to be treated as ordinary prisoners. I shall come to that by-and-by; but, assuming that they ought to be so treated, what justification is there for the charges made against me on every platform in England? How have I interfered to make their punishment heavier than the law has made it. I am charged with having jested over the sufferings of these people. Sir, I have never jested. I have never done so; but in my opinion a great deal of what has gone on is essentially absurd and unworthy of grave treatment, although I have always tried to treat it gravely; and surely it indicates a morbid and diseased state of the public mind when an audience like that addressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle could find tears to weep over the self-imposed discomforts of Mr. O'Brien, but only laughed when the right hon. Gentleman mentioned the death of Mr. Inspector Martin.

*MR. JOHN MORLEY: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. I was present at that meeting, and all I can say is, I did not hear laughter, nor did the reporters of any newspaper, except two.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The truth is undoubtedly, that, as I admit, you have produced some temporary effect among your own followers. They believe seriously that a great tragedy is being enacted in Ireland. But we who see the mechanism of all this drama; we who see the trap-doors, the scene-shiftiers—yes, and the well-dressed *claque* sitting in the stalls—we do not think that amidst the real tragedies of contemporary Irish history—which is full of tragedy—the stage tragedy of Mr. O'Brien deserves an important place. But I pass from these criticisms to the larger and more important question, whether we ought or ought not to make a distinction between Crimes Act prisoners or a special section of them and other prisoners. Now it seems to me there is a confusion of thought here, almost exceeding the inaccuracy of statement. As I gather, there are three arguments for this distinction of treatment. There is the "distinguished and the popular man" argument—the argument which says that because a man is a good speaker, or happens to be popular with his fellow-countrymen, he is not to be treated as an ordinary prisoner. Next, there is the genteel argument—the argument which says that because a man has been brought up in circumstances of comfort and luxury, therefore he ought to be treated more tenderly than the man who has had a rough life and who has

had harder fare. And there is the third argument—that these are political offenders, and because they are political they ought to be treated with greater leniency than would be the case if they had committed ordinary offences. I think the first argument is wholly absurd. The Member for Bridgeton made a speech in Glasgow about the eloquence of Mr. O'Brien, and founded on that an argument that he should be treated exceptionally. I will not dispute with the right hon. Gentleman about Mr. O'Brien's style. No man has had more experience of it. But to me it seems absolutely absurd to say that because any individual happens to be gifted by nature with eloquence or any other qualities which endear him to large masses of men, for that reason he is to be specially treated. As to the genteel argument, I will only say that there is this much to be said for it. It aims at equalising treatment which, though nominally the same, is not really the same for persons differently brought up. I think, perhaps, that is a strong argument; at all events, it has some meaning. Very good, then; carry it out in your prisons generally. There are 20,000 prisoners, on any given day, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, under the ordinary law. There are about 100 Crimes Act prisoners. If you want to reform, begin with the 20,000, and not with the 100. Now, Sir, I come to the more important argument, which says that a distinction ought to be drawn in favour of the Crimes Act prisoners, because they are guilty of a political offence. The right hon. Gentleman has quoted Bentham, but I am bound to say that Bentham would have fainted if he had heard that argument. Does the right hon. Gentleman seriously lay it down in this House that the Executive Government should choose out for special favour, for special treatment, those prisoners who aim by criminal means legal objects? Bentham would have been shocked beyond measure. I do not deny that in one sense those offences are political, but in another sense they are not. You yourselves have been in the habit of saying that they are not. It is said their object is to simply relieve the Irish tenants and to prevent people from being turned out of their houses and homes. That may be a good object, but it is certainly not a political object. Therefore, if your own account be taken they are not political offenders. But I will waive this. These men, I do not doubt, have a political object in view. They have stated over and over again that they are carrying on the work of the rebells of '98, the rebells of '48, and the rebells of '68. Some of them have announced that they adhere to the physical force party. They tell us they are engaged in operations which practically mean rebellion, or are intending to carry on the work of rebellion, and that therefore makes them political offenders. Yes, and it makes the dynamiter a political offender. It makes the political assassin a political offender. And until you are prepared to carry out your principle to a logical conclusion, until you are prepared to say that the man who attempts to blow up this House or murder a Chief Secretary or other official is to be treated with special relaxation of the prison rules, your political offender argument, in my opinion, absolutely falls to the ground. The right hon. Gentleman seems to hold that because a man aims at a good object, that justifies him. Is the right hon. Gentleman so ignorant of jurisprudence as to hold that because a man aims at a good object that is a ground for giving him special and exceptional treatment? I cannot imagine a man having a better object than that of supporting his wife and family; yet if he goes out and steals something from a baker's shop in order to effect that object you do not make that man a first-class misdemeanant—you send him to penal servitude. I want to know how you are to reconcile facts like that with the contention you now advance? I will take a stronger case—that of your own Corrupt Practices Act of 1883. Under that Act, if a man corruptly gives £5 to assist in bringing into Parliament a candidate whom he conscientiously believes will support that Party whose advent to power may in his opinion be the saving of the nation, you send him to prison and inflict on him all the ignominy of ordinary imprisonment. Perhaps he may be a Member of this House—he may be passionately beloved by the constituency he is wooing; but on that account are you going to give that man

exceptional treatment? Until you can draw a distinction between him and the Gentlemen below the Gangway. Your argument stands self-condemned. You take the case of the man who deliberately breaks the law in Ireland. I say that he is indirectly responsible for the crime which he knows often has followed and probably may again follow from the action he has taken. I think it would be a monstrous thing to distinguish between those who come down to preach against the landgrabber and the moonlighter who goes, in consequence of that incitement, and fires bullets through the landgrabber's windows. But, if there is to be different treatment, do you think the Government ought to decide that question? I say that a Court of Law, and a Court of Law only, is entitled to say what sentence the man shall undergo. The right hon. Gentleman thinks I ought to determine what sentences these men should undergo. I think that is a monstrous doctrine, which, if carried to its fullest extent, would utterly destroy all equality of punishment, all responsibility of Courts of Law, and throw on the Executive Government a responsibility which no Executive could bear without discrediting itself. You require me to modify arbitrarily the punishment of persons like the Member for North-East Cork, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. Finucane. Am I to modify the punishment of their associates? Am I to distinguish between the inciter to crime and the committer of the crime? Does he found that doctrine upon any principle of jurisprudence? If so, does he limit it to Irish prisoners? Why, Sir, if this principle were carried out, we should have to remodel, not only the whole prison discipline from the top to the bottom, but the whole principles upon which the laws of the country have hitherto rested. I may say that I shall not object myself to have the general question adequately discussed; but what I shall object to is the carrying out of this principle for a first time in connection with a particular class of prisoners under a particular law. I shall require that you make any alteration general in its application, and that the measure you mete out to the Crimes Act prisoners in Ireland shall be meted out to prisoners in England and Scotland and the unproclaimed districts of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman missed out, as I told the House, all reference to the accusations levelled against me with regard to the maltreatment of prisoners. And he did well, for those stories are false. He has also left out all reference to stories which, unhappily, are true of the monstrous system of intimidation to which prison officials in Ireland are subjected whenever it suits the political game of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. The story is a melancholy and disgraceful one—I will not weary the House with it, but I could show you in case after case how warders are insulted and sometimes assaulted in the streets. A Governor had disgraceful charges trumped up against him, I believe, simply and solely because he was engaged in one of those transactions. I would remind the House of the terrible tragedy of Dr. Ridley, how his windows were broken, how he was spit at in the streets, how he lost his practice, and was reduced to fear of want, all because it pleased hon. Gentlemen oppo site, in pursuance of a political design, to set that agitation on foot against him. Now consider the last case—the case of Clonmel prison. The moment Mr. O'Brien was put into gaol the persecu tion began. It began with a most monstrous article published in a local print, called, I think, the *Nationalist*. I will not read the whole of that article, which suggests, among other amiable things, that I am a proper subject for assassination. Then it goes on to say that the callous and brutal conduct of the prison doctor was simply outrageous." The result was what you might expect —volleys of stones were thrown, his windows were broken, his shutters were broken. The unfortunate man had to turn out armed with a rifle, he had to seek the protection of the police, and since then he has not been a moment without that protection. Three societies employing him as their doctor at once gave him up, many of the Roman Catholics of the town rapidly left him, and every effort was made to ruin his practice or tamper with his honesty. The fate of the Governor is not much better. He and his wife and children cannot leave the prison without protection. Threatening letters—not like those foolish missives which are sent to me and to other right hon. Gen. when they are in power,

and are the outcome of a disordered brain—but threatening letters which mean something are sent to him, and this outrageous persecution is simply and solely the result of the fact that he has attempted to administer the rules imposed upon him by his superiors and by Parliament, and that in doing so he happens to have excited the wrath of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway and their friends in Ireland. I am glad to have this opportunity of calling attention to what I think one of the meanest and most disgraceful episodes of an agitation which has been stained by many mean and many disgraceful episodes. I now turn to the not less important—perhaps even more important question—of the grounds on which these men have been convicted. I would point out to the House that all these recent events in Ireland must be taken as parts of a whole. They are parts of one great conspiracy to make the administration of the law an impossibility. The hon. Member for North-East Cork advocated, to the best of his ability, in a letter which has been made public, a great movement in favour of starting the Plan of Campaign and making the administration of the law impossible all over Ireland. Please notice that it was not merely the Plan of Campaign which was to form the weapon of hon. Gentlemen. All those prison scenes—all those scenes in Court—are part of the same great drama. For they know that while disorder and outrage are the proper instruments for influencing Ireland, sensational scenes and inaccurate statements are the corresponding means of appealing to the English public. I call attention to an interview stated to have taken place between the hon. Member for North-East Cork and the representative of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in which it was stated that one of the main objects of the drama as to the prison clothes was to make the administration of a Coercion Government impossible. The same statement has been made by other persons. The date of the paper is February 18, 1888. He said:—"My means are governed by great principles. First, it is absolutely necessary to avail yourselves of every possible opportunity you can to put every conceivable obstacle in the way of the easy working of a Coercionist Government." I am not arguing whether that is a good or a bad object; I am pointing out that it was the object, and these scenes were the first steps towards the attainment of it. The hon. Member for North-East Cork has five times come before a Court of Law. The first time was at Mitchelstown, the second at Middleton, the third at Loughrea, the fourth at Carrick-on-Suir, and the fifth at Tralee. At Mitchelstown his counsel described the opposing counsel as a liar, he was asked to withdraw and refused, and went out of Court with a great flourish of trumpets. At Middleton, Mr. O'Brien attempted to escape in the middle of the trial, and a bogus telegram intended to facilitate that escape was sent to the police. At Loughrea, in the course of the trial there, the depositions were stolen. [An hon. MEMBER: By whom?] At Carrick-on-Suir, Mr. O'Brien and his counsel, the learned Gentleman the Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), engaged in a transaction which I can only interpret as a deliberate attempt to get up a riot. That attempt was finally successfull, and in the middle of the disorder, out goes the Member for North-East Cork, rides across country, turns up at Manchester, does exactly what he intended to do—namely, makes a scene, goes back to prison, and makes another scene. Then he is tried again at Tralee, and at Tralee the same drama, with slight variations, is played again. Again, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford insults the Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): How did I insult the Court? Will the right hon. Gentleman quote my speech?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman knows perfectly well how he insulted the Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has insinuated that I called somebody a liar; next that I tried to get up a riot, and, lastly, that I insulted the Court at Tralee. Will the right hon. Gentleman justify his accusations?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman is mistaken. I did not charge him with calling anyone a liar. He was not the counsel in the Mitchelstown case; when, however, he was counsel at Tralee, I believe, he used language of a very improper kind.

[A VOICE: Quote.] I shall not read, and I shall not quote.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I rise to order. I wish to ask whether a statement can be made that I, in the course of my professional duties, insulted a tribunal without advancing some reason for that allegation?

MR. SPEAKER: It is not for me to order any reason to be given; it rests entirely with the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not the least desire to hurt the feelings of the hon. Gentleman. [An hon. MEMBER: Quote the words!] I have not the words here, but I recollect them perfectly well, wherein he described Colonel Turner as a sneak. I do not know whether that is language that meets with the approval of the front Opposition bench. The Court held that that was not a decent proceeding, and the hon. and learned Gentleman left the Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I did not leave the Court. The right hon. Gentleman will do me the justice to say that I did not leave the Court. I was dragged from the Court. I did not insult the Court. Colonel Turner was not a member of the Court, and it is right that I should state that I said what I did of Colonel Turner under provocation given to me by him the previous night, when I arrived in the town and he shouted out I was a blackguard.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not make any comment upon the explanation the hon. Gentleman has given. At all events the fact remains that he was carried out of Court, and that he produced that kind of sensational scene which invariably accompanies these proceedings. Now, Sir, all these scenes represent the smaller and meaner side of the Irish agitation; the more tragic side is connected with the objects which these Gentlemen, the hon. Member for North-East Cork and his Friends, have had in view in supporting this agitation. When they found to their dismay and disgust that Ireland was quietening down, that crime was diminishing, that boycotted farms were being taken, they determined to do all that in them lay to put an end to a state of things so disastrous to them and so beneficial to the country. Their instrument was the Plan of Campaign. Now, has the House realized what the Plan of Campaign is? We all know that it is an illegal action, and that high authorities pronounced it to be an immoral action. Has the House realized not only that it is illegal and immoral, but that it is productive of the most disastrous and tragic consequences in every district where it is set up? The Plan of Campaign means something more than an illegal combination among tenants; it means boycotting, it means evictions, it means outrage; it often means, or may often mean, murder. It promotes those scenes at the time of evictions which have been more than once on the very verge of producing bloodshed; and I say that the man who deliberately goes down to a district in order to further the Plan of Campaign and the invariable accompaniment of the Plan of Compaign, boycotting, who preaches it in a district where the Plan does not exist, and where land-grabbers do exist, and where they are known by name—I say that that man makes himself responsible for the crimes that follow from his action. I will take as an example of what I say what occurred at Kerry. In no district in Ireland have the beneficent effects of the Crimes Act been more apparent than in County Kerry. The recrudence of the agitation of which the hon. Member for North-East Cork is the leading Representative began at the end of September. In the County Kerry, from the 1st of August to the middle of October, the only agrarian crime was one threatening letter. The *fiat* goes out from the Member for North-East Cork, the whole machinery of agitation is set to work; meetings are held, the Plan of Campaign is preached, the land-grabber is denounced. What is the result? Why, Sir, the result is that from the 14th of October till towards the end of December eleven cases of crime, mostly serious crime, occurred. Killing cattle, maiming cattle, arson in various forms — all these occurred, and undoubtedly were in a large measure owing to the action of these gentlemen.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman give the districts where they occurred?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They all occurred in County Kerry.

MR. DILLON: Kerry is an immense county.

* MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman doubts that there is some connection between the Plan of Campaign and crime, let me remind him that on the 1st of January this year moonlighters went round Lord Kenmare's estate and threatened the tenants that if they did not join the Plan—that peaceful method of adjusting differences between landlords and tenants—they would have to take the consequences. And let the House notice, when they talk of combinations among tenants, that these combinations are never, or hardly ever, the result of the spontaneous action of the tenants themselves. They are hounded on to these proceedings by Gentlemen below the Gangway. Of the four or five gentlemen who were specially engaged in this transaction, not one was a tenant-farmer. One was a journalist, one was an hotel-keeper, one was a shopkeeper in Killarney, and one a draper in Bantry. On the Olphert Estate, the name of which has become faithfully familiar to the ears of hon. Gentlemen, I believe the houses were fortified under the instructions of a stranger, and, in one case at least, they were defended not by the families to be evicted, not by people fighting for their hearths and homes, but by outsiders, brought in for the purpose of carrying on that which is to all intents and purposes an episode in civil war. [An hon. MEMBER: In three cases!] Yes, in three cases. I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman for his reminder. With these facts, what is the use of talking about conciliation? What is the use of stating in your Resolution that what you desire is conciliation, when you (pointing to the Members below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House) are the people who stop conciliation? You foul the stream and you ask us to give you clear water. Where your baneful influence does not spread there will you find the relations between the people and the police, between landlord and tenant, daily improving. But let some of these successors of the rebels of '98, '48, and '68 come down, and speedily there is a change. Just because their object is not peace, but disorder, they produce war between classes; they produce outrage, riot, boycotting, and that which invariably, in the long run, accompanies boycotting—they produce assassination; and under these circumstances surely it is little better than a mockery for the right hon. Gentleman to come down to this House and tell us we are the people who are to attempt conciliation, when it is the forces of the law, and the law only, which, under difficulties of an unprecedented character, made by you, are still nevertheless, in spite of all you can do, carrying out the beneficent work of conciliation in the most disturbed parts of Ireland. Although I am sorry to say that I have not finished yet, I do not think I need go any more into the case of the hon. Member for North-East Cork, but I must say a word with regard to the version of the imprisonment of Mr. Harrington, the Member for Kerry, which formed so large a part of the right hon. Gentleman's indictment in the country. The right hon. Gentleman has now dropped some of his charges. He boasted in the country that he would support in Parliament the case he then made; but he has not done so. He made a charge of a serious character against the magistrates; he said they had refused to state a case, although the Court of Exchequer declared the point on which a case was stated to be worthy of solemn argument. The right hon. Gentleman is entirely wrong. The matter which the Court of Exchequer declared was one for argument was not the matter brought before the inferior tribunal at all. The right hon. Gentleman owes an apology to Mr. Cecil Roche for making him the object of an accusation which will not bear a single moment's examination.

*MR. JOHN MORLEY: Since the right hon. Gentleman challenges me, I am perfectly prepared to meet him; but I omitted the argument on that point because I thought that it might be much more effectively presented by the hon. and learned Member for Longford. I am prepared to stand by every word I said on that subject, and I am supported by as competent legal authorities as those who advise him.

* MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman is a gentleman of amazing courage. He wishes me to wait and see what is the result of an argument between the hon. and learned Member for Longford and my hon. and learned Friend near me. I cannot deal

with a case which has not been presented. I have stated my argument, and let the hon. Member for Longford refute it when it comes to his turn. The right hon. Gentleman described the action of the magistrates in sentencing Mr. Harrington to six months' imprisonment as monstrously vindictive, but at the same time he abuses the magistrates because they engaged that if Mr. Harrington would promise not to repeat the offence he should not be punished. Those two complaints are not consistent. If the magistrates were as vindictive as the right hon. Gentleman would have us believe, they would not have taken the course of offering to withhold punishment if a pledge were given. Let him choose which accusation he wishes to go upon, and not in the same breath complain of a vindictive sentence and of the offer of a too lenient alternative, if the hon. Member promised not to repeat the offence again. He states that Mr. Harrington was imprisoned on account of the *Times*' case, and that the sentence was vindictive; but Mr. Harrington had a right of appeal. If he had appealed he would at all events have been at liberty pending the appeal. And if the sentence were vindictive, why did not Mr. Harrington appeal? I hear something said about a County Court Judge, but County Court Judges in Ireland are not open to the charge that they have any connection with the Executive Government. They are as independent as any Judge on the bench in England or Ireland, and they hold by the same sort of tenure. As Mr. Harrington did not appeal, depend upon it the reason was that he knew very well he had committed an offence which the County Court Judge would not have looked on more leniently than did the Court of First Instance. What was that offence? The right hon. Gentleman said that he made a speech at Portsmouth, in which he said that the League and the law were in conflict, and he was in favour of the League. The right hon. Gentleman quoted a part of the Magistrate's speech, but unfortunately only part of it. I notice that the right hon. Gentleman's quotations generally begin too late or end too early; but he has been far exceeded in inaccuracy by the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan), who sits near him, for the right hon. Gentleman has stated that Mr. Harrington was condemned for a speech which was declared by the magistrates to be an innocent speech. That is absolutely incorrect, and totally without any kind of foundation. The magistrates never said, and never could have said, anything of the kind.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I said he was found not guilty.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is quite a different statement. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the speech of Mr. Harrington was an innocent speech—innocent information given to his constituents. ["No, no!" *and* "Quote the words!"] I will quote. The right hon. Gentleman said Mr. Harrington had made a speech which the Court pronounced to be a perfectly innocent speech. I say the Court did not pronounce it to be so. On the contrary, the Court distinctly said that such language often led to crime. It is perfectly true the Court did not convict him on that speech. But why? Because the only evidence they had of the speech was a newspaper report, and you require evidence other than that of a newspaper report to convict upon. Mr. Harrington admitted that he made the speech, but the magistrates did not convict him upon the speech itself, not because it did not deserve punishment, but because they did not happen to have the technical and legal proof they required. They convicted him upon the charge of illegal conspiracy.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to explain what it was I did say? What I stated was that Mr. Harrington was charged with having made a speech in defence of the Plan of Campaign, and the magistrates stated that the evidence did not bear out the charge.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is not what the right hon. Gentleman stated.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I may have used the words that they declared him innocent.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman distinctly stated in his letter that Mr. Harrington had been sentenced to six months' hard labour for publishing an innocent speech for the information of his constituents, and that the Court acquitted him of having

recommended the Plan of Campaign. I say that this was a wholly erroneous presentation of the facts. The facts are that Mr. Harrington published this speech, which undoubtedly was his, that this speech preached boycotting and the law of the League. It suggested every species of intimidation, and it was made at a meeting of a suppressed branch of the League. He was convicted on that charge. Were the magistrates right or wrong in convicting him? Let me remind you that the object in suppressing the Land League, especially in Kerry, was that it was an instrument of illegal action; it was the instrument of the Plan of Campaign; it was the instrument of boycotting and intimidation. In furtherance of that suppressed organization Mr. Harrington made that speech, in which he powerfully advocated all the objects for which the National League has been suppressed, and that in a suppressed district—in a district where agitation was being carried on by his Colleagues for the same objects, which had been quiet, but which was becoming disturbed, and which undoubtedly, if the Land League had been allowed to revive and carry out the programme which in this very speech Mr. Harrington recommended, would have become as bad in 1889 as it had been before. Is not that a sufficient reason for putting in force the existing law with regard to suppressed branches? Recollect that where Mr. Harrington made this speech, where he tried to revive this suppressed association, was a county where not long ago, at the instance of this very association, Horan and Fitzmaurice had been murdered. If any hon. Gentleman will look at the policy of the Government as a whole, he will see it struggling all through the winter months with a conspiracy, the object of which was to revive all these frightful forms of outrage and intimidation, and he will feel that the Government could have done no less than proceed against Mr. Harrington when he did that which it was openly avowed and boasted of was against the law. When the right hon. Gentleman reproaches us with having suggested that Mr. Harrington should not be punished if he would promise not to offend again, does he not see that the object of law is to prevent crime rather than to punish it, and that there could be no more effectual method of preventing it than by getting Mr. Harrington to promise that he would not again offend? If we could have got that promise, we should have obtained all the advantages which I hope may accrue from his imprisonment without the necessity of having recourse to that unfortunate alternative. I now come to the inaccuracies of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division, and I call attention to those inaccuracies because inaccuracy of statement is the great difficulty we have to encounter in England. Of course we are accustomed to the amazing exercise of imagination on the part of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway; but we have some right, I think, to expect a little more accuracy than from one who is an ex-Chief Secretaries to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In this very letter to which I have alluded, the right hon. Gentleman, in reference to the case of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Patrick O'Brien), made some of the most astonishing mis-statements. The right hon. Gentleman said—

"This very month the Member for Monaghan was charged with advising tenants not to buy their holdings under Lord Ashbourne's Act, and was convicted."

That is the first proposition. That proposition is absolutely erroneous.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I admit the date is wrong.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: But the right hon. Gentleman mentioned the case with a view to showing what is going on now, and he actually alludes to a case that happened a year ago, and speaks of an hon. Member who is at the present moment in the actual exercise of his liberty.

An hon. MEMBER: For a while only.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the hon. Member was sentenced to three months' hard labour. He was not.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I said distinctly I was informed that the sentence was one of hard labour, but that I had been unable to verify it.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN rose——

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman wishes to interrupt me with regard to part of my argument, let him

by all means do so; but I hope the House will notice that I am subjected to an amount of interruption to which hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House never are. I have no objection to the hon. Member making an explanation, if it is relevant; but these interruptions break the thread of my argument.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I only desired to say that I was sentenced to four months' hard labour; but my case, on appeal, came before the only independent County Court Judge in Ireland, and he reduced the sentence to three months as a first-class misdemeanant.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The explanation of the hon. Member is not relevant to my argument. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division went on to say that the offence of which the hon. Member who has just interrupted me was convicted—and he made this statement twice, in a letter and in a speech—was that he advised the tenants not to purchase under Lord Ashbourne's Act. That statement of the right hon. Gentleman has since been made the subject of severe accusations against the Government. It is not correct. The charge in connection with Lord Ashbourne's Act was withdrawn, and the hon. Member was therefore not convicted of that.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I say he was found guilty on it.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He was not found guilty on it.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I repeat that he was.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That charge was withdrawn, and he was sentenced, not for preaching against Lord Ashbourne's Act at all, but for preaching the Plan of Campaign.

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman deny that Mr. Patrick O'Brien was sentenced by the Resident Magistrate on the charge of having made a speech to Lord Monck's tenants, in which he advised them not to purchase under Lord Ashbourne's Act?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am always glad when the right hon. Gentleman makes an interruption, because——

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that the hon. Member was convicted on the charge of having made a speech in which he advised tenants not to purchase under Lord Ashbourne's Act?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman has made this interruption, for it reminds me of a favourite method of his and of his Friends. A speech in respect of which a prosecution is brought often contains a variety of matter—some of it is guilty, some innocent, some more guilty, some less guilty. The conviction takes place on the most guilty part of the speech, and then the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends think they are making a fair accusation against the Government when they pick out some part of the speech which is innocent, and allege that the person charged was convicted on account of that part, and that, therefore, it was an unfair conviction. Such is the logic and fairness of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I maintain that the hon. Member for Monaghan was not convicted of having advised tenants not to purchase under Lord Ashbourne's Act. He was convicted of preaching the Plan of Campaign. When I reflect that the right hon. Gentleman must have in his own recollection the kind of misrepresentation to which Irish Secretaries are subjected, when he knows from his own experience the difficulties with which we have to contend, it is melancholy to see the right hon. Gentleman sinking to such depths in order to atone, if possible, for the unpardonable offence of having attempted for two years to administer the government of Ireland with honesty and courage. I have now surveyed all the important points in the indictment the right hon. Gentleman has brought against the Government to-night, and I think we have now the material before us for making some kind of comparison between our policy and that of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I have stated that in England, Scotland, and Ireland there are 20,000 persons in prison. In Ireland there are only 100 persons in prison under the Crimes Act; and I say that if the object of imprisonment be to prevent crime, never before have such splendid results been achieved at so little cost. You may dislike the Act and the whole system of its administration, but the results can scarcely be denied. Only 100 men are in prison, and not one of these is innocent—indeed, it is made a matter of boast that they are guilty, and have been found guilty by the

tribunals of the country. And not one of these men is in prison for a political offence. Not one is in prison for the expression of his opinions, or for agitating for any general change in the government of his country, or for attacks, however violent and unprincipled, against any Member of the Government. Crime and incitement to crime are the only offences that are punished under this Act, and the punishment of crime and incitement to crime has always produced, as far as I know, good effects in every country. And the good effects of the Act are manifest and clear. In spite of the conspiracy—[An hon. MEMBER: Pigott.]—I say, in spite of the conspiracy of which I have said something to-night, Ireland shows every sign of improvement. I will not go over the figures again, which have been already referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, but I hope that every man in the House and in the country will realize that the statistics of agrarian crime and agrarian intimidation show the most marvellous improvement since the Crimes Act has been put in operation. Trade has improved, railway traffic has improved, agriculture has improved. Men are settling down to the business of life, and are beginning to find that there is something more profitable than agitation and turmoil. Good feeling is springing up between different classes of the community wherever hon. Gentlemen opposite will let it, and I think every competent observer will echo the resolution passed by the Dublin Chamber of Commerce—not a body of landlords, or a body specially connected with the agrarian interests of the country—in which they say they attribute a large part of the improvement in the country to the energetic action taken by the Government under the powers given them by the Crimes Act. This is what we have done and are doing, and we are in a position to contrast this with that golden age which will come in when right hon. Gentlemen opposite, instead of being critics of Irish Aministration, will have the control of Irish affairs. Then, I suppose, the work of '98, '48, and '68 will be accomplished. I refer to these things because they are always being referred to by hon. Gentlemen, not in their English, but in their Irish speeches. But I feel certain that the men who were engaged in the movements of '98 and '48 would have shrunk from the methods which are being adopted to-day. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to Mr. O'Connell. Mr. O'Connell was not a rebel, and I also believe that if he were living now, patriot as he was, he would have shrunk with horror from the methods adopted by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and approved and condoned by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Those methods are methods under which no civilized Government can last. They would destroy any State to which they were applied. Under them no man can serve the master he will, no man take the land he will, no man can make the speech he will. I observe that one of the colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman has used every effort in his power to ruin every single individual who came to the Liberal Unionist banquet which was given to me in Dublin a fortnight ago. [An hon. MEMBER: Who gave it?] That is the value which hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and, I presume, above the Gangway, really attach to free speech in Ireland. Now, Sir, I call this slavery. To you (pointing to the Opposition) I understand it seems like freedom, and I admit that freedom of a kind is given by it. There is the freedom of every debtor to compound on his own terms with his creditors; there is the freedom of every citizen to decide what portion of the law he may think it worth his while to obey, and what portion of that law he is, in the elegant language of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, to trample and to spit upon—it is the liberty of every criminal to decide what sentence he shall suffer when the tribunals of the country have declared him to be guilty. Well, Sir, if these are principles now preached by hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway and practised by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, I ask what is to be the future of Ireland when the happy day comes in which the constituencies will reverse their decision, and the right hon. Gentleman, instead of criticizing the Government of Ireland, has to conduct it? I do not know what the full consequence of that action will be, but I know that never yet in the history of the world have agriculture and commerce flourished under a system so absolutely subversive

of law and of liberty as the system which the right hon. Gentleman now desires us to administer in Ireland. I do not believe—and this is my last word—that these are the principles that will win the verdict of the country, and I am certain that if they are principles which are ever to be enforced they would destroy the best-compacted Empire which has ever been put together by the wit of man.

MR. LOCKWOOD (York): I can assure the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down that I shall be very careful in what I say not to travel outside the indictment of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland which has been preferred by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Morley). I have a good reason for not doing that, because I venture to think that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has found in that indictment a great deal more than he has been able to answer to-night; and in the course of his remarks I am free to say that he has travelled both far and wide of the question which is now under the consideration of the House. Much of the right hon. Gentleman's speech will need little comment from me, for the greater part of it was nothing more than a confession of failure. Her Majesty's Government traverse the Amendment by saying that their policy has been attended by salutary results. But in commencing his answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, the Chief Secretary goes into details and incidents which really show that, so far from the policy of the Government being attended with salutary results, it is bringing the law which the Government have to administer into contempt in the country in which it is administered. The right hon. Gentleman has alluded to a scene which took place in the Court in which my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) played a part. Is that one of the salutary results of the Government for which the right hon. Gentleman is responsible? The right hon. Gentleman has also given an account of a speech made by Mr. Harrington, and has pointed out how Mr. Harrington advocated the Plan of Campaign, as the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think, successfully, and the right hon. Gentleman thinks that is one of the salutary results on which the Government are to congratulate themselves. Fully one-half, or more than one-half, of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was a confession of failure, and with regard to the rest of it, much may be left to be discussed between the right hon. Gentlemen on either side, and a good deal may be discussed, and I have no doubt effectively, by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Longford. But there is some portion of the Chief Secretary's remarks which seems to me to be relevant to the question now before us. As I understand the right hon. Gentleman with regard to his powers of interference, he has on many public occasions expressed what he considers to be his position with respect to interference with prison discipline. He says—

> "I do not believe, and will not believe until it is demonstrated, that it is in the power, or can be the duty, of a Member of the Executive Government to modify the treatment, not of classes of prisoners, but of individual prisoners whom he happens to make the object of special favour or aversion."

Now that is a view which I would interpret in this way: that he has no power to interfere in any particular case with the treatment of any individual prisoner. Now I think that the House will see that the right hon. Gentleman considerably modifies that statement. In the speech which he made on the 2nd February—I think at a banquet given by the Liberal Unionists at Dublin—the right hon. Gentleman considerably modified the statement he made on the 4th December, when he said the Prison Board was not in his Department; but on the 2nd of February we find him pointing out that there may be exceptional circumstances connected with any prisoner in Ireland which would come before him. But the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly aware that there are powers which he has in respect of prison discipline. I noticed that just now he made an appeal to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary with regard to his powers in this direction, and I inferred—though I may have been wrong—that my right hon. Friend did not agree with the observation made by the Chief Secretary. The Statute, which is perfectly familiar to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, gives him this power—

"That, subject as in this Act mentioned, the prisons to which this Act applies, furniture, food, appointment of officers, control and safe custody of prisoners, shall, on and after the commencement of this Act, be transferred to and vested in and exercised by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State."

That is the power of the Home Secretary. The powers of the Chief Secretary are set out in 40 and 41 Vict., just as directly and just as clearly. In that Act it is provided that the Prison Boards shall be called

"The General Prisons Board for Ireland, and that such Board shall consist of Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and not more than two other members to be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant . . . . . and to hold office during the pleasure of the Lord Lieutenant."

I call the attention of the Chief Secretary to these words, that he may not again fall into the mistake—

"Such Board shall, subject to such directions as they may from time to time receive from the Lord Lieutenant, and to the provisions of this Act, have the control and management of all prisons and all prisoners therein."

Surely that Act makes it abundantly clear that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has this power. But is it not an idle waste of time to discuss whether he has the power or not, when we know, as a matter of fact, that he has exercised it, and in the very direction in which we wish him to exercise it? The right hon. Gentleman quoted from the judgment of Chief Baron Palles, and he read a Report furnished to him by a learned counsel, whose name he refused to give. I do not know why he refused, or whether it is that he suggests my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy) would take dire vengeance on the unfortunate member of the profession were his name given. Now, this gentleman, whoever he may be, who advised the Chief Secretary for Ireland, appears, in the advice which he gave, to have lost sight of one or two very important points. First, let me take his quotation from Chief Baron Palles's remarks. Suppose for a moment that the quotation is correct. It is suggested that he stated that he over-ruled the Judges of the High Court more frequently than he over-ruled the Resident Magistrates.

* MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; that is not so. The Chief Baron was comparing the number of times in which he over-ruled the decisions of Resident Magistrates with the number in which the County Court Judges reversed convictions on appeal before them.

MR. LOCKWOOD: That makes my point so much the stronger. These appeals to the County Court Judges are appeals which do not involve the mere question whether or not there is any evidence. The hearing before the County Court Judge, as some of the hon. Members who sit below the Gangway know to their cost, is practically a hearing *de novo*. It is a new trial; it involves not only the question whether there was any evidence on which to convict, but it allows the whole question to be gone into. Now, in a case coming before the Judges of the High Court, there is no such wide inquiry. The investigation is limited in its scope, and the only question which they can consider is as to whether there was any evidence or not before the Magistrates to justify the conviction and the sentence passed. The two cases, therefore, are absolutely different. In the one case it is an inquiry *de novo* before a County Court Judge, and you have the whole circumstances of the trial laid bare for re-investigation. In the investigation of the High Court, the Judge's inquiry is limited, and therefore one is not surprised that the statistics are as stated by the right hon. Member. I pass now to consider the other points which the right hon. Gentleman alluded to. I am not sure whether they were supplied by the anonymous counsel, but they come next in order to the quotation from Chief Baron Palles. The right hon. Gentleman told us, Sir, that the percentage of convictions before juries was higher than the percentage of convictions before Resident Magistrates. In the cases before the latter, the percentage was 71; in the jury cases it was 66. Why, Sir, what an admirable argument that gives us for the preservation of trial by jury in Ireland! How does it assist the right hon. Gentleman? Of course, we know that before the magistrates come all preliminary inquiries; it is their duty to sift the evidence, and say whether or not there is a case to go before a jury. You might as well say, Sir, you find that the Grand Juries return more true bills than there are convictions follow upon the proceedings before the Magistrates!

Such an argument would be worth just as much as that put forward by the right hon. Gentleman. The Magistrates make the preliminary inquiries for the purpose of ascertaining whether a case exists or not. Every case they dismiss, of course, affects the figures, and surely, then, these figures cannot be said to assist the right hon. Gentleman in any sense whatever. The indictment put forward by my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle was wide enough. I wondered how the right hon. Gentleman opposite would attempt to meet it. We know that in another place this indictment has been made, but I must say it has never before been preferred in such strong, eloquent terms as it was preferred to-night. In another place, in answering it, a noble Marquess relied upon statistics, and I waited to-night with some patience to see whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, in answering my right hon. Friend, would also rely upon statistics, because I recollect that some time since he said that, for himself, he put but little reliance in them. I do not suppose he has changed his mind in that respect now; many of us, indeed, put little reliance upon statistics, and some of us have learnt to put less, since we have ascertained the method in which those statistics are obtained. Some of us have heard of the outrage book which is kept at district police stations; some of us have heard of the process of selection that goes on by the officers in charge at those stations which enables them to class crimes as agrarian or non-agrarian. We have heard also how these selections are again submitted to the arbitration of the Divisional Magistrate, who, if he does not approve of the selection, alters it in any way he chooses. Sir, this preparation of statistics is a matter of selection by persons who are firmly convinced that the only way to govern Ireland is by coercion, and who themselves are bound to provide the Government with the necessary material for showing that the system of government which they approve is the best. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, is perfectly right not to trust to statistics, for they are not to be relied upon. Now, we come to consider his answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle. As I said just now in my opening remarks, I will endeavour not to travel outside anything that was said by my right hon. Friend, for I fully recognize how unjust it would be to the Chief Secretary to have the case opened against him, to have to reply, or rather endeavour to reply to it, and then afterwards to have sprung upon him charges which had never before been made. Let us take the first case he quoted—the case of the Member for North-East Cork, (Mr. William O'Brien). I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider it in this regard: not as to whether Mr. O'Brien has been guilty of crime, but I want him to satisfy me, if he can, that the steps which the Government have taken to prosecute Mr. O'Brien have been attended by the salutary results to which claim is laid in the Speech from the Throne. What is the position of Mr. O'Brien? He goes from one prison to another escorted by troops. Is his progress from gaol to gaol that of a discredited prisoner? Why, Sir, it is the progress of a triumphant hero. Is this, then, one of the salutary results of the policy of the Government? And the more black you paint him the worse it makes it for the case of the Government. This man has committed what the right hon. Gentleman opposite considers to be a heinous crime, and accordingly he ought to be treated as a criminal and a man to be despised; but, as a fact, he is hailed as a hero, as a man who has carried on a brave and generous warfare for the sake of his fellow-countrymen. Let us pass next to the case of my hon. Friend, Mr. Carew. We have not heard so much about that case to-night: it is a painful case; for the hon. Gentleman, by his amiability and courtesy, has won the friendship, and he will continue, Sir, to maintain the friendship, of many Members of this House. What is the case with regard to him? I am anxious not to repeat anything that has been said before, and therefore I will not go into the question of what he said. We know that he was convicted because he made a speech alleged to be in the direction of inducing persons not to take an evicted farm on the estate of the Marquess of Drogheda. This speech was made on the 11th November last. Afterwards Mr. Carew attended his Parliamentary duties; he passed in and out amongst us; he went down to the Royal Commission, with which my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General

is so familiar. He passed in and out amidst the serried ranks of the Royal Irish Constabulary. No charge was made against him, but he goes down to Scotland—he goes down to East Perthshire to assist in the candidature of the hon. Gentleman whom we have been glad to welcome to day as a Member of this House; and the Government choose this unfortunate time for pouncing upon him. They arrest him, and he is dragged back to Ireland, and suffers the indignities of which we have read in the public Press, and of which we have heard mention in the House to-night. What is the offence he has committed? Are the Government prepared to deal out even-handed justice to both parties in the matter of these speeches? On the 18th February, the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh went down to Portadown, and in the course of his speech said—

"As to a Home Rule Parliament, nothing under Heaven will make us recognize it, or obey its laws as long as we have right arms to strike with; the very moment there is a chance of a Home Rule Parliament, we should arm; we should drill, and within a fortnight we should put 50,000 men into the field under arms."

These, Sir, are the words of a disciple of law and order! Just imagine the converse being the case. Just imagine hon. Members below the Gangway on this side of the House addressing a public meeting in similar terms, and saying that they would arm unless they got a Home Rule Parliament. Why, the right hon. Gentleman would appeal to this House and the country, and say, the speech showed the true result of the policy of the Nationalist Members. Yet the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh preserves his moustache; he has his personal liberty, and he is still at large. We are told we are to put up with treatment such as has been received by Mr. Carew, and it is not to be criticized, whilst speeches of this nature are to be treated as the outburst of irresponsible persons, or are to be treated as speeches which do not tend to disorder or the breaking of the law. Now, with regard to the very sad case of Father McFadden, I join heartily in what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle said, with regard to the disastrous results which followed from the attack made by the police upon Father M'Fadden, when he was almost on the steps of the altar, and I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has frankly admitted that there was a grave error of judgment upon the part of the police in choosing that moment for the arrest of Father M'Fadden. Then who is responsible for it? It is a matter in which the Government are responsible, for they have the choice of persons who are to carry out their behests, and if they put the discharge of these duties in the hands of incompetent men then they must bear the burden of it. It is a doctrine of constructive responsibility which the Government are always attempting to fix upon hon. Gentlemen who sit upon these benches. Do the Government recognize salutary results of their policy in the way in which the public treated the arrest of Father McFadden? I have an extract here from a paper describing one of those salutary results of the Government's policy, which says that when Father McFadden was escorted from Gweedore he was surrounded by military and police over 100 strong; skirmishers on the hills kept watch in case of an attack, and engineers were prepared to repair any bridges that might require it. And this is the state of things which is going on in Ireland—a state of things which is the direct result of the policy of Her Majesty's Government; and so far from the Government recognizing this as being a salutary result, why, the very speech of the right hon. Gentleman to-night shows that their policy has been, as I say, a dismal and disastrous failure. We are told that crime and outrage have diminished. I am glad of it; I hope the Irish people are realizing—and I believe under the teachings of their national leaders they are realizing—that there are no greater enemies to the cause which we have advocated now for something like three years than those who commit crime and outrage. I have only one other topic to which I think it necessary to refer. The right hon. Gentleman opposite denies having spoken in a jesting spirit of the prison treatment of Mr. O'Brien. I am glad indeed to accept that denial, because it removes from my mind a very unpleasant impression which was created upon it by the right hon. Gentleman's speech at Dublin, on the 2nd February. He

says he was not jesting. I find the right hon. Gentleman addressing a very favourable audience, provoking laughter by his references to the historic breeches of Mr. O'Brien. He, amidst roars of laughter, described Mr. O'Brien as having been for 36 hours naked in his cell. Unless this denial had been made, and unless it had been accepted, I should have asserted that this incident of provoking laughter at the expense of a prisoner was one of the most deplorable incidents in a most deplorable business. Let us imagine any Judge of the High Court of Justice, who in the discharge of his duty had found it necessary to imprison any person brought before him, not only forgetting the dignity due to himself, but so utterly forgetting what is due to the dignity of his position and his office, as to stand up and provoke laughter by his description of the privations and hardships of the men for whose imprisonment he was responsible. I think such an incident, to use the words of the Amendment of my right hon. Friend, can only be viewed with "reprobation and with aversion," and I venture to think it is in that spirit that this policy of Her Majesty's Government is being viewed by the majority of the people; and, you may depend upon it, it will continue to be so viewed. It is no answer for the right hon. Gentleman to scoff at another policy, which we think a wiser policy; which we think a more peaceful policy, and which we think, in the words of the Amendment, "much more likely to bring about a true union between the people of this country."

MR. A. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I cannot allow this occasion to pass without saying something in contradiction of the statements made by the Chief Secretary. He seems to suggest to this House that the Irish Members who are put in prison are treated just as are any other men who have broken the law. Now this is not the case. He does not speak from experience, and I do speak from experience. I remember being 23 weeks in a cell, 9 feet by 8 feet, at a period of the year when the weather was as cold as it is now, and many of my hon. colleagues occupied cells of similar size. When it is cold in London and snowing very hard, you who are outside the prison walls feel it considerably, but you have very little sympathy with those men in prison who have been guilty of nothing except that they sought too well to defend their constituents. We who are sitting on these benches endeavour to defend our people, perhaps too roughly and too rudely, but still we do so honestly, if we have not the polish of University men such as some of those hon. Gentlemen who sit opposite may have, and who come to this House for ornamental and not for useful purposes. Now, I remember being taken before two magistrates with reference to an estate in Donegal owned by a man named Olphert, the same estate as that on which District Inspector Martin has lost his life. I deplore that loss of life as much as anybody. I suppose it injures our Party quite as much as any other, but we are not accountable for it, and I think it necessary that in this House some explanation should be given of our conduct. I was invited to go down to the Olphert Estate from my own constituency as a arbitrator, and I endeavoured to adjust the differences between the landlord and his tenants. At that time the Land Commissioners were giving reductions of 5s. 6d. and 6s. 6d. in the pound. I offered an adjustment on the basis of a 4s. 6d. reduction, and I think it was a most reasonable offer. This estate has from time to time been before Commissions and Committees of this House. It is the very estate for which I got six months' imprisonment; it is the estate for which Father M'Fadden got six months' imprisonment; it is the estate for which Father Stephens got three months; and it is for matters connected with the same estate that Father Stephens was re-arrested yesterday on coming out of church. The Solicitor General for Ireland last Session said this was a model estate, and that Mr. Olphert was a good landlord, who resided on his estate. But what is the description of a good landlord as gathered from the Report of one of the Select Committees, which some years ago inquired into the grievances of these tenants? One of the witnesses stated that he himself resided on this estate, and he knew that the people were not sufficiently clothed; that they had not sufficient dress for the purposes of decency; the dresses of the women were so short that they did not reach down to their knees, and

their necks, arms, and breasts were bare. A question was put to this witness, "Was it such clothing as modest women would wish to wear?" and he replied, "No; it was not." "These people," he added, "were ashamed to go out of their houses." This, Sir, is a description of the destitute condition into which these people were driven. Another witness was asked, "Do your people use seaweed as an article of food?" The answer was, "Yes, with Indian meal." The majority of the people have only one meal a day. In addition to all these hardships, the people are subjected to a sort of slavery which is called "duty work." A witness was asked what duty days meant, and his reply was that the people were pledged to do duty days—that was, to give three days' work at certain periods of the year, or to pay half-a-crown in money in lieu thereof. Another witness was asked if he saw people, and he replied that he made a house-to-house visitation. He was asked if the clothing of the inhabitants was sufficient for the purposes of decency, and he gave it as his opinion that it was not.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE): What is the date?

MR. BLANE: Thirty years ago; but it is the same now. I recently made a house-to-house visitation, and found exactly the same state of affairs prevailing. Charity was dispensed by Relief Committees, but the money was scarcely in their hands before the landlord pulled it out again. To be sure, the duty work has to some extent come to an end, but the result of the grinding system still exists. I and others have been imprisoned for the action we have taken in the hope of ameliorating the condition of these people, but it by no means follows that on that account we shall cease to defend the people. Father M'Fadden did his best to adjust the differences between landlord and tenants. He was always a valuable man to the landlord, as long as he could get charitable people to hand in money for relief. It was only when it was seen that he would not apply for any more, because he saw the robbery which was going on, that he was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. Part of the evidence given against me was a speech made by Father M'Fadden. The rev. gentleman enjoined patience, but advised the people to stick to their combination. To do that I hold he had a perfect right. My case, however, really turned upon the meaning of the Celtic word "Chiferma," the equivalent of which in English is, "I hope" or "I expect." It was argued that the word was used by me as a person in command to persons supposed to obey, and that it amounted to an inducement under the Coercion Act. Neither of the magistrates understood a word of the Celtic language, and yet they convicted me. I only mention this circumstance for the purpose of showing how absurdly the Crimes Act tribunals work. What happened in the case of the arrest of Father M'Fadden? There were plenty of police in the district who might have been used, but one police officer was anxious to distinguish himself. He drew his sword, and proceeded to the arrest of Father M'Fadden, whose offence, if offence it was at all, was a misdemeanour and not a felony. That was not a proper way to proceed against a man such as Father M'Fadden. The mere drawing of the sword and wielding it over the priest's head was a threat. I deplore the death of the constable, but surely it cannot be laid at the door of Father M'Fadden. What do the Government intend to do in respect to the case? They intend to change the venue. The Solicitor General for Ireland has already made an application to the Judges of the Superior Courts for the change of the venue to Fermanagh, in which county the prisoners will not have the slightest chance of obtaining justice. Every Catholic who steps forward to the jury box will be challenged and told to stand aside. You will empanel 12 Orangemen. You will beat the drum ecclesiastic against Father M'Fadden and his fellow-prisoners. All the dishonourable ways of government in Ireland will be resorted to, and Father M'Fadden will assuredly be deprived of every opportunity of showing what he has done in defence of his people. I cannot conceive anything more disreputable than the treatment Father M'Fadden has received at the hands of the present Government.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Stockport): I am sorry to have such a limited audience, but it is quite clear the debate must proceed, and I will address my remarks and opposition to the Amend-

ment. Complaint was made by the hon. and learned Member opposite that the Chief Secretary has said very little indeed on the subject of the Amendment, but I do not think the hon. and learned Member himself said anything more or did more than to pick out and endeavour to answer small points in the Chief Secretary's speech. A great many small complaints have been made of the administration of the law by the Chief Secretary, but it seems to me most of these complaints should rather be made against the law than against the Administration. They are out of date; they would have been all very well two years ago, but they are out of date after the Act has been passed by large majorities in this Assembly, and with only one division in the House of Lords. It seems to me it would be very little use indeed to give votes to the large majority of Her Majesty's male subjects, and then ignore their Representatives here, who declare, by emphatic majorities, it is necessary to pass a law and do pass a law to effect certain objects. It is little use, I say, conferring these votes at all, if the minority is not only to be disgusted with their position, as indeed minorities generally are, but are to go about in a manner Parliamentary minorities never did before in the history of this country to render the working and enforcement of the law passed by the majority well-nigh impossible. In former times, when it was thought necessary by the majority who sustained the Ministry—majorities too, not so large as support the present Government, and not returned on anything like such a popular basis—when it was thought necessary to pass certain legislation, it was the honour, duty, and glory of Her Majesty's Opposition to support the Government in the maintenance of the law even though they disapproved of the law itself. But it has been reserved for the Opposition led by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to do their utmost to make the administration of the law impossible. All we hear—all these dramatic scenes we have had performed—have had this object. All this has been done by leaders of the Liberal party, whose experience should have taught them their line of duty, who may at some future time—long distant, I hope—be again in office and entrusted with the administration of law. We have been told by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite that no reforms have taken place except by first breaking the law, but he and I have read history very differently. I could point to reform after reform brought about not by breaking the law, but because the sense of the nation acknowledged the necessity. I will not deny that there may be circumstances when it would be politic to break the law in order to call attention to its badness, but then let it be done with real courage, in a dignified manner, in a way to call public attention to what you are doing, and show you are acting from principle and not from petulance, and take your punishment like a man, and not like a woman in a quarrel. According to the new doctrine promulgated, the motives of a man are to be considered in apportioning his punishment, together with his position in life, and knowledge. After all, what do we mean by enforcing the law? We have heard a good deal about coercion. I was not fortunate enough to hear the whole of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, but I heard him say that not one man in fifty on our side of the House had gained his seat without giving pledges to his constituents against coercion. Well, though I may be the only man in the whole number, I can speak with a clear conscience, for the first time I went among my constituents I told them I was in favour of coercing anybody and any set of people who break the law; and I cannot conceive how law can exist without it. Law and coercion are correlative terms; coercion is simply an enforcement of the law in England or in Ireland, and the only question is whether the law is unfairly or unjustly enforced in Ireland. A great authority on the subject has told us in a letter written ten days ago — a letter read at the great meeting at Edinburgh, where Lord Rosebery was the principal speaker—I allude to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian—in answering the question "Why are these gentlemen, Irish Members and others who have been committed to prison for breaking the laws, political prisoners," that it was—

"Because the Tories and Dissentient Liberals thought fit, under the pretence of legislating against crime, to pass a law making that which

previously had no concern with any crime, except this which the Act itself creates, in making Irishmen liable to jail—"

I don't know quite what this means but the right hon. Gentleman is a master of the English language and can explain—

"for acts of exclusive dealing or for encouraging the same in others, which exclusive dealing is practised at will by Tories in England. What is a crime in Ireland is no crime in England."

Later on the same letter says "that what Mr. O'Brien threatened to do in Ireland the Primrose dames can do in England." The statement is that ten years ago a law was passed making that a crime in Ireland which is not a crime in England. There is a noble Lord, an ex-Lord Chancellor, who has been Attorney General under the right hon. Gentleman—Lord Selborne—who fortunately spoke in the debate on Thursday night, and it would have been well if the right hon. Gentleman who, with all his knowledge and talents, is no lawyer, had consulted Lord Selborne as to the meaning and effect of the Act commonly called the Crimes Act, 1887. That noble and learned Lord showed very distinctly indeed that no new crime whatever was created by that Act, and that what is unlawful in Ireland is unlawful in England. What this Act did was this—it applied to acts already illegal both in Ireland and England a new procedure, under which two magistrates should try certain cases, instead of such offences being sent before a jury. No doubt, certain offences are described as crimes against this Act. That is only for matters of procedure. No new crime was created. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will, in the interest of truth, consult his tried and sometime trusted colleague before he commits himself to such another statement, and will be prepared to recant what he has said about crimes being created by this Act. Then he says the offence called boycotting is something quite innocent: it is only exclusive dealing as practised by Tories and Primrose dames in England! That is a remarkable statement, coming from the right hon. Gentleman; for do we not remember that at one time, when it was his duty to administer the law, he spoke in the severest terms against boycotting as ultimately resting upon and sanctioning murder? Its character has not changed; it still means murder, unless the strong arm of the law intervenes. What at the very outside is the exclusive dealing of Primrose dames? It is practised equally by Radicals. A man naturally makes his purchases, if the articles are good and cheap *cæteris paribus*, of the dealer who has the same views with himself on religious and political matters. That is human nature. But can you point to any case where through exclusive dealing of Tories or Primrose dames any one was unable to buy the necessaries of life, having the means to do so? The fact of A buying from X instead of Y is a very different thing from a combination of A, B, C, D, and so on, to prevent a man buying, and shopkeepers from selling to that man, under a system of boycotting enforced by dread of murder. We know perfectly well how it has been carried out to the extent of preventing food being bought for a child or a coffin to bury one. The right hon. Gentleman having all the facts before him, tries to persuade an incredulous and mocking country that this is no more than the exclusive dealing practised by Primrose dames! If Primrose dames or Tories did the same thing there are plenty of people ready to prosecute them for it. I never knew Radicals unwilling to make an outcry against a Tory who did anything of which they did not approve. If Lord Salisbury is suspected of not giving a site for the erection of a building by a Dissenting body, there is at once a clamour in the Radical papers. If such things have been going on all this time, why have they not been exposed to an indignant public? I am sure Tories or members of the Primrose League would be the first to throw stones at anyone who brought disgrace on their cause by such conduct. Boycotting is such an innocent thing, says the right hon. Gentleman, although in olden times it was so horrible, it led up to murder. I am reminded of Sheridan's "Rivals." It will be remembered that Lydia Languish gets literature from the circulating library, not of the most select character, and hastily puts the books out of view on the approach of Mrs. Malaprop, Sir Anthony Absolute directing her maid to "Put the 'Innocent Adultery' into the 'Whole Duty of Man.'" The right hon. Gentleman includes "Innocent Boycotting" into

the "Whole duty of Irishmen;" but I disagree with him. We are informed in the Queen's Speech that the operation of the law has had a salutary effect, and it appears boycotting is likely to be put down; and, considering this as a challenge, the Opposition advance this Amendment. Well, I do not think this is a very strong remark to put into a Queen's Speech. I can remember the time when the right hon. Gentleman opposite boasted of the salutary effect of his legislation on Ireland, but I am afraid the results have not realised expectations. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle is moved to wrath, and does not think it right the Speech should claim any salutary effect for the Act, and challenges us to declare that the administration of the Act has been harsh and unjust, that it violates the rights, and alienates the affections, of Her Majesty's Irish subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain. I did not hear the whole of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, but I do not understand that he showed what rights had been violated, though he said much of affections alienated. But what part of Her Majesty's Irish subjects have been alienated in affection? Not, certainly, those Protestants and Catholics so ably represented at that large meeting to which the Chief Secretary has alluded; not, certainly, the affections of loyal men in different parts of the Island. Those are alienated who were alienated long ago, who had no affection whatever left when the Government came into office, and went about protesting their intention to effect a final separation. I will not use the quotations I have here, but it is well known there were no affections to alienate on the part of those who had determined to do away with every link of connection between the countries but that of nominal sovereignty. Nevertheless, we are told that Irishmen, who three years ago had no affection for this country, who then used the most unmeasured terms of abuse towards Her Majesty's Ministers, terms I think not equalled by those to which the present Government have been subjected—we are told by the right hon. Gentleman, who, with Christian forgiveness, forgot all this abuse, that in consequence of what they have been doing these men are coming round to love and admiration for England. That is a little inconsistent with the Amendment, which further declares that the administration of the Act is received with reprobation by the people of Great Britain. Nine tailors of Tooley Street once had an idea that they represented the people of England, and I do not know that nine or ten ex-Members have a better founded claim to represent the people of Great Britain. I find when I go down to my constituency that nine-tenths of the working men who collect in large audiences to hear what I and my colleagues have to say, sympathise entirely with Her Majesty's Government. I am quite aware there is a small number outside whose sympathies are the other way, but I am not able to discover that three years ago they held any other view, or have been moved to reprobation and aversion by the administration of Her Majesty's Government. The Amendment asks that such measures of conciliation may be adopted as will bring about the contentment of the Irish people and a real union between Great Britain and Ireland. Well, to my mind a deed of separation is not the best way to produce a union between a couple who have not loved one another before. If the Government have been unable to carry measures of conciliation that will improve the material condition of the people of Ireland, the obstruction of hon. Gentlemen opposite accounts for the fact. If hon. Members will look at the complaints made against the Irish Executive they will find that they all arise from the laudable desire of the Government to combine as far as possible with the exercise of their necessary and stern duty a regard for the views of hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition benches. Hon. Gentlemen opposite are jealous of the success of the Government and do all they can to defeat their attempts at conciliation. We have been asked to express our dissatisfaction with the Government because of the manner in which they have administered the law; we have been told of the delay in prosecutions; we have been told of the folly of arresting Father M'Fadden on Sunday just after his service; we have been told that, although the Chief Secretary gave no order for the arrest

of this priest, on the doctrine of constructive liability he must be held answerable; we have been told that Mr. Carew ought to have been arrested a great deal sooner if he was to be arrested at all; we have been told that Father M'Fadden, or the other priest arrested before him, ought not to have been allowed to wear his own clothes, or, at all events, if he was allowed to do so, Mr. O'Brien ought to have been allowed to wear his. As I say, all these troubles of the Government arise from the fact that they have endeavoured to satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite. Why was there delay in the arrest of Mr. O'Brien? It was because the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House announced last Session that he would do his utmost not to interfere with the power of hon. Members to attend the House; and then, as the House will remember, the question of contempt of court arose in connection with the Commission of Inquiry, and it was necessary that Mr. O'Brien should attend the Court, and consequently it was not possible to arrest him. That was the reason of the long delay. The action that was taken last Session, involving the loss of two nights with regard to the Breach of Privilege question, entirely arose from the desire of the Government to give notice to hon. Gentlemen who were proceeded against by way of summons instead of issuing a warrant form. All these things have resulted from the endeavour of the Government to grant concessions and to meet the views of the Irish Members. If they had gone on doing their duty sternly and plainly without attempting to meet the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, they would not have been so much found fault with. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last but one was rather severe on the Chief Secretary, on the ground that he had taken up, as he said, two inconsistent positions with regard to his powers as to the management of the Irish Prisons, and the hon. Member quoted two Acts of Parliament to show that the Home Secretary in England and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Leiutenant in Ireland have the power of controlling and managing the prisons, but he did not show, as he ought to have done, that all these powers are subject to a general controlling Act of 1865, and that that Act constitues Prisons Boards and lays down distinct regulations, within which the Home Secretary and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant are bound to act. I confess that the Chief Secretary strained the law almost to the point of breaking when he allowed Roman Catholic priests to wear their clothes in gaol. But he did that with a good motive, and it ill lies in the mouths of Roman Catholic Gentlemen opposite to say that because the right hon. Gentleman strained the law in regard to those particular persons, therefore he ought to strain the law in order that the same thing may be done in the case of Mr. O'Brien. I desire to give that hon. Member credit for not playing the part of a child. I suppose he really has an idea that he is standing up for a principle when he will not get into a second class carriage, and insists upon not wearing prison clothes. I am not disposed to think that these prisoners ought to be treated differently from other people who commit the same crimes; because we are not dealing here with merely political offences, with sedition, and offences of that kind. We are dealing with acts that are offences against the law, quite irrespective of the motive with which they are committed, and the only thing that makes these Gentlemen political prisoners, or gives them the semblance of being political prisoners, is that their ultimate motive is said to be a desire to change the law. But, as the greatest crime against a State is the attempt to subvert it, the punishment of these Gentlemen ought to be heavier rather than lighter; for their conduct is provoked by no accidental ebullition of temper, but with the avowed desire of bringing the law into contempt. And why should so much sympathy be extended to the hon. Member for North East Cork? Surely a high-souled patriot who talks as the hon. Member does might submit even to the indignities of which he complains without making so much fuss. The hon. Member would go further if he dared. He is like the boy with the wooden sword, who is boasting of the great deeds he will do, when, while flourishing his weapon, he scratches his hand on a nail, and then begins to whimper. The hon. Member is quite willing, if he dared, to lead thousands in the field, but to have his hair cut short is a brutal indignity about

which the country must be roused. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh has said that in a hypothetical case certain people would resort to the divine right of rebellion. There is a right to rebel—I stand up for that divine right—but the rebels must look to their chances of success first. If it is successful it is no longer treason. What sympathy can you have with rebellion that ends in whimpering? He said, on the 4th of June, that he had promised his American friends that they would march onward until they had hauled down the flag of Orange ascendancy in Ireland for ever.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): May I ask the hon. and learned Member to be kind enough to tell the House if he is quoting from a pamphlet of the Loyal and Patriotic Union, connected with Mr. Houston, whose evidence we have heard with so much interest lately?

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: I have taken care, in giving these extracts, to give them from sources which cannot be disputed. They do not come from the Loyal and Patriotic Union, and I do not believe that the hon. Member whose language I am quoting will repudiate his words. On the 17th of July, 1887, the hon. Member said, "I only wish we had power and weapons to do something more effective than talking." That is the Gentleman who is now whimpering about his treatment in prison. It is a specimen of the language used by the hon. Member for whom we are asked, at the present moment, to show sympathy. Mr. Arnold Forster, speaking of Mr. O'Brien in the character of editor of *United Ireland*, says that he made himself, above all others, the advocate of every form of cruelty; that he has pursued individuals with malignant and cruel spite; that he has done his best to ruin those who differed from him; and that his chief efforts have been directed towards making more bitter and more forlorn the lives of poor men and women. I have myself read through many numbers of *United Ireland*, and I am able to say that the description of Mr. Arnold Forster is not overdrawn in the least. Mr. O'Brien has not contested that during the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) he assailed with most virulent abuse nearly every Member of the Administration, particularly Lord Spencer and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow. He said that Lord Spencer stuck at nothing, and was prepared to resort even to secret torture. A remarkable thing, however, is that, in doing all the things of which mention has recently been made, Mr. O'Brien should have the countenance of a statesman who ought to know better. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian is of opinion, like the statesman of whom Dryden wrote—that if he could not be in power himself, no one else should rule or be in power. I shall vote with great heartiness against the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman.

An hon. Member called attention to the fact that 40 Members were not present.

The House was counted, and 40 Members were found to be present.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I have only one remark to make with respect to the speech of the hon. Member who has just addressed the House. It does appear to me that when an hon. Member quotes the speeches of any hon. Member, he is bound to say from what source he has gained his information. The hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge), as far as I gathered, quoted speeches made by the hon. Member for North East Cork some years ago.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE: as recently as 1887.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: But, when the hon. Member was challenged by the hon. Member for Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond) he was absolutely unable to say from whence he obtained them. I do not think that is a desirable course to take. I wish now to bear a sincere tribute of admiration and gratitude to the right hon. Member for Newcastle for the vigorous, eloquent, and sustained arraignment of the policy of Her Majesty's Government which he delivered early in the evening. The force of that attack may be measured by the feebleness with which it was met by the Chief Secretary. I think that the Chief Secretary, who is a great master of debate, must have been sensible of the thinning of the ranks behind him while he

was speaking, and the silence which prevailed when he sat down. The right honourable Gentleman must have felt that his performance this evening was hardly so successful as it has been in the opinion of his Friends on previous occasions. The speech of the Chief Secretary recalled to my mind a long letter which was addressed by the right hon. Gentleman to Mr. Armitage, a constituent of his in Manchester. That letter occupied a column of the *Times*, and it was accompanied by another letter to the editor; but neither those letters nor the speech of this evening dealt with the real complaint which the people of this country have against his policy at this moment. The English people do not care whether there were five or four warders engaged in stripping Mr. O'Brien. They do not wish to know those trivialities. What they desire to know is why this spirit of brutality which the right hon. Gentleman has infused into his myrmidons in Ireland prevails throughout that country. What is the right hon. Gentleman's reason for visiting on hon. Members whom many of us are proud to call Friends those indignities which have shocked the minds of the people of this country? The right hon. Gentleman says that the public mind is in a morbid and diseased state. He may rest satisfied that there is a good reason for the outcry which has arisen in this country, and that the morbid and diseased state of mind is to be found somewhere else than among the electors. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that he had a great grievance. He twitted the right hon. Member for Newcastle with having omitted some of the charges made against him during the Recess. My right hon. Friend spoke for an hour and a-half, but it was impossible for him to traverse the whole ground of the right hon. Gentleman's administration. I myself ventured to interpose the remark that the House will hear plenty about these things before we have done with the Debate. The right hon. Gentleman then asked why all the accusations against the Government should not have been made before he rose. We did not put up the right hon. Gentleman to follow the right hon. Member for Newcastle. I remember last year when Mr. O'Brien told the right hon. Gentleman he was there to meet him face to face that the Chief Secretary refused to follow his antagonist, and the excuse he made for not doing so was that he desired to hear the whole of the Debate, so that he might reply to other remarks as well as those of Mr. O'Brien. The hon. Member for Stockport said that the time has gone by when we should express our opinions against the law (meaning thereby the Coercion Act of 1887), but that hon. Members are free to criticize its administration. I can assure the hon. Member that he is very much mistaken in that view. I maintain that the manner in which that Act was driven through the Committee of the House took away from the persons to whom it applies a great deal of the onus of obeying that law. There are persons now in prison in Ireland for supposed offences created by clauses of that Act, which is now the law, and which the Chairman of Committees, by an order of the House on June 17, 1887, passed through the Committee within 12 or 13 minutes, no Member being allowed to ask a Question or move an Amendment. I say that that strikes at the root of the validity of all legislation in this House. If we are to have such laws forced through in this way, I declare that all confidence in the law of this country will have passed away. But there is another circumstance which ought to be borne in mind in connection with this matter. On April 18, 1887, on the morning of that day when it was known that the second reading of the Bill would be taken, these detestable forged letters appeared in the *Times*. (*Cries of* "Oh!") [Mr. DILLON: He believes they are all right.] Well, the hon. Gentlemen opposite who cry "Oh!" have more faith than most of their colleagues. I used the words "forged letters" deliberately. Speaking in the light of recent revelations, it is not too much to say that that Act of Parliament was conceived in iniquity and brought forth in sin, and if any such Act were passed in relation to the county or division which I represent, and was so forced through the House, I would willingly and gladly ask the inhabitants of that Division to disobey its provisions, and run all the risk I might incur in doing so. But, apart from the nature of the origin of

this law, the mode in which it has been administered has deprived it of all title to respect. What I complain of is that the Government, in the action they have taken, have loaded the dice, and have placed in the hands of the owners of land the power of suppressing lawful combinations among the tenants, with the object of forcing the price of land above its natural level, under ordinary circumstances. And what is the conduct and character of the men with whom the administration of the law rests in Ireland? In my judgment the administration is open to the gravest animadversion and censure. All of us are familiar with the way in which it is administered. In February last I troubled the House with an account of the way in which the Executive Officers in close relation with the Government have selected particular magistrates to try particular cases. The Chief Secretary on that occasion refused to give the information I asked for, but through the kindness of a friend I obtained the particulars, and if any hon. Member will do the same he will find that the cases tried by Mr. Cecil Roche, Mr. Hodder, Captain Segrave and others, have been out of proportion to those which have been tried by other resident magistrates. No doubt there is a reason for that. In regard to Captain Segrave, the Solicitor General for Ireland has stated that an investigation, promised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this House, on December 22, is now going on. Well, but the statements made by the honourable Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner), if they are correct—I do not for a moment assume that they are—but if they be correct they prove that this man at the time he was administering the law was nothing more nor less than a common thief. If any such charges as those which had been made by the hon. Member for Mid Cork against Captain Segrave had been made against a stipendiary or any unpaid magistrate in this country, the Lord Chancellor would not have allowed him to exercise his functions for a single day until he had cleared himself from them. I maintain that immediately these charges were made against Captain Segrave, the Chief Secretary ought to have telegraphed to Ireland to relieve him of his judicial functions, pending a full investigation. By the first mail home from South Africa the case ought to have been complete. It is monstrous that a man over whose head such serious charges were hanging should be allowed to continue the administration of justice.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): Let me remind the hon. Member that in reply to his question this afternoon I stated that, pending the investigation and since its commencement, Captain Segrave has not been exercising the functions of a magistrate.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS: The hon. and learned Gentleman says—"Since the investigation commenced." Am I to understand that Captain Segrave has not exercised the functions of Resident Magistrate in any respect since the 22nd of December last?

MR. MADDEN: I am unable to state the particular date, but the investigation commenced immediately after attention was called to the matter in the House by the Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. Sexton). It is still proceeding, and during its prosecution Captain Segrave has nor been exercising the functions of a magistrate.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS: I accept the hon. and learned Gentleman's explanation; but my information goes to show he has been exercising his functions since the charges were made in this House. I do not now want to pin the right hon. Gentleman to any particular date, but I shall wait with anxiety to see the investigation concluded, as it no doubt will be before long, the charges having been made over two months ago in this House. I take Captain Segrave as an illustration of the character of the men who have been entrusted with the administration of the Crimes Act in Ireland. I will now turn for a moment to another incident upon which I asked a question this evening; and as it is illustrative of the state of Ireland, it is necessary that I should trouble the House with full particulars. The House will remember that I asked a question with respect to the action of a certain Mr. Hodder, a Resident Magistrate in the town of Ennis, in connection with the meeting there to protest against the prison treatment of Mr. O'Brien, and the reply of the Solicitor General was to the effect that the circumstances and details of the question were by

no means correct. I interposed, and asked the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he had obtained his information from the incriminated person, and his only reply was that he had obtained his information from the usual sources. I entirely agree with the right hon. Member for Newcastle that in these matters the last person to learn the truth is the Chief Secretary, especially when he goes to what he calls the usual sources of information. I hold in my hand a communication from the Chairman of the meeting stating that he and others who went to hire the Temperance Hall for the purpose of holding a meeting to express the feeling of the people there as to the treatment of Mr. O'Brien were followed and obstructed by the police, and on their going to the barracks to complain of the conduct of the police, Mr. Hodder said he would not allow a meeting to be held to denounce the conduct of any high officials of the Government, and that those were his instructions. According to this account, the instructions of the Chief Secretary were that no meeting should be held at which speeches were made or resolutions proposed condemning high Government officials. The writer of the letter replied to Mr. Hodder that it would be impossible to hold any meeting and comply with the instructions he had received. At this Mr. Hodder expressed his intention to be present at the meeting, and that if anything occurred which he deemed improper he would call on it to disperse. The meeting assembled; a body of police, 20 in number, entered the hall with Mr. Hodder, who demanded to see the resolutions that were to be proposed. They were handed to him, and, having glanced at them, he said that the resolutions were illegal, and constituted the meeting an unlawful assembly, and therefore he gave five minutes for its dispersal, and ordered the police to clear the hall. The Derbyshire Regiment was in the square outside, drawn up ready for action. The resolution that Mr. Hodder would not allow to be proposed was a protest against the inhuman treatment of Mr. O'Brien, and it did not challenge the conduct of any high officials by name. The fact that Mr. Hodder would not allow the resolution to be put to the meeting is not denied by the Solicitor General. All he said was that the account given in any question of the conversation was inaccurate. Now, the resolutions are these—

"First, that we, the Nationalists of Ennis, in public meeting assembled, protest with all our hearts against the inhuman treatment practised on Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., in Clonmel prison. Our feelings are so strongly agitated that we find it difficult to express what is surging within us at the barbarities to which Mr. O'Brien has been subjected have, to our mind, no parallel in the history of civilized Government. If this system of torture is continued we fear for the ensuing consequences in our country —a country scourged as it has been for centuries with the lash of oppression.

"Second, that if the professed sympathy of the English Democracy is sincere, we think the time has now come for united and determined and settled action on their part. That course is made perfectly clear by the treatment of Mr. O'Brien in Clonmel Gaol, and we call upon them at once to put into practice their professions of friendship to the Irish people."

I am informed that these were the only resolutions proposed, and I ask the House what is the sort of Government of a country when the respectable people of Ennis cannot meet together in their temperance hall without an armed force of police constabulary traversing the town and putting an end to meetings in an arbitrary manner? It is a good illustration of the manner in which Ireland is being governed at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman did not think it beneath his dignity or his high office when at Dublin to deliver an extraordinary harangue to the Irish constabulary—a force of armed men—representing as if they were engaged in warfare with their fellow countrymen. That speech was unworthy to be addressed to an armed force of the kind by a Minister of the Crown. What is the effect of that course? I will give one illustration. We have heard a great deal about the expenses of the Special Commission, which will, of course, be enormous. Subscriptions were set on foot for hon. Members involved in the Charges and Allegations, and this has been interfered with by the Government. The facts are these, supplied to me by one of Her Majesty's Queen's Counsel, an authority altogether beyond dispute:—"The occurrence took place at Tiboline, French-park, Co. Roscommon, on Sunday, 19th December last. Subscriptions to the National Indemnity Fund were invited by a number of the most respectable men in

the parish, who met in the chapel yard of Tiboline, and appointed a man out of each townland to apprise the people of their own townstead that subscriptions would be received at the chapel gate. No posters or handbills were issued, so that nothing appears to have been published of an exciting or inflammatory character. The National League had been suppressed in the locality, but the subscriptions were invited quite independently of the League or its organization. The only element they had in common was that Mr. Thomas Morris Roe, who acted as secretary to the fund on the occasion, happened to be also assistant secretary of the branch of the League established in the parish. The meetings of the League were never held at the Chapel of Tiboline, but at the village away from it. On the 9th of December a table was placed outside the gate of the chapel yard, against one of the pillars of the gate, and Thomas Morris Roe attended there to receive subscriptions, having the lists ready to fill up, and containing the names of some who had already subscribed, including the parish priest and the curate. Two constables from Frenchpark, named McGlaughlin and Burns, came up and demanded to know what the collection was for, and being told that it was for the Mutual Indemnity Fund, replied that the money should not be collected in a proclaimed district for any purpose. They got the lists from Roe, and kept them, and he refused to return them, the only satisfaction they would give being that when asked for them they said they would send them to Roe 'from the right quarter.' Roe at first refused to desist from collecting, but after a time left the table and went into the chapel to attend Mass. When he came out the constables were still there, and when he resumed the collection they took the names of those who subscribed, and ultimately Burns called out to McGlaughlin that the people were holding a meeting and that they had a right to disperse them. At this point the people were showing signs of irritation, and Roe told them to go home, which they did. One of my informants states that the constables collared and jostled the people who were coming up with their subscriptions, and finally threatened to use their batons, and that one of them actually drew his baton. These are substantially the facts so far as they have come to my knowledge." I ask, again, what can be the state of a country where constables can prevent subscriptions for any purpose whatever in a proclaimed district? I say nothing of the incredible meanness of this kind of thing. While you are asking the House for sums of money for this conspiracy which is being unmasked, your myrmidons in Ireland are preventing the collections which the poor peasantry of Ireland, out of their scanty earnings, are sending over to help their countrymen to fight their battles against you. It is like a strong man fighting a cripple; it is meanness to the depth of which one should have supposed no English Government would ever have descended. This is the system of which the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) said that in Ireland we find, "working from end to end a great system of justice and equality." The Prime Minister, in "another place," said that the people of Ireland were coming round to the side of the Government. Why, he knows very well that if a General Election occurred in Ireland to-morrow, the system of the Government would be condemned. The hon. Member for North Tyrone has acknowledged more than once that he would lose his seat.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (from below the Ministerial Gangway): I never made any such acknowledgment, and that fact is as reliable as most of the facts I have heard to-night.

*MR. ELLIS: I am very glad to see the hon. Gentleman taking his seat on the other side of the House, and some other hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen might with advantage follow him. I believe I am perfectly right in saying that the hon. Gentleman admitted Mr. O'Brien would win his seat.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: No.

*MR. ELLIS: Of course, I accept the hon. Gentleman's statement. The Government has no mandate to govern Ireland as they are doing, as certain hon. Members have found in addressing their constituents recently. I will not refer to "Vote for Weymouth and no Coercion," nor to "Colomb and no Coercion." I will not refer even to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who promised a great deal of decentralization in Ireland;

I will not even dwell upon the President of the Board of Trade, who goes to his constituents and utters, more or less, platitudes about reform of the Government of Ireland, though evidently he is not able to carry them in the Cabinet; nor would I refer te the hon. Lord (Hartington) who, as the hon. Member for West Leeds said on the 15th February last, when face to face with his constituents, promised reforms of the Government of Ireland. I turn, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Gentleman who occupies the distinguished position of the Chairman of this House. I hope I shall speak with that courtesy and respect which is due to one who fulfils so high a position, though it is not in that capacity I shall speak of him. I have carefully examined the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman on platforms to his constituents, and elsewhere, and I find they are in sharp contrast with his position in this House, —conduct which goes to the root of the representative character of this House. In his Election Address, dated 12th June, 1886, he says:—

"It is for the people to decide, and the judgment of the people will soon be declared at the polls. I trust it will be unequivocal in its resolution to maintain our Parliament, under which English, Scotch, and Irish may, without discrimination enjoy equal guarantees of liberty and justice. In Ireland, as in Great Britain, local self-government should and must be established."

I ask the right hon. Gentleman, in all seriousness, what steps he has taken in this House to make good those words. He had an opportunity on the 25th April last year, on the Bill of the hon. Member whose absence we all regret, when the noble Lord, in a straightforward and manly way, washed his hands of all responsibility, and declared for simultaniety and similarity of Local Government for the two countries, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) did not speak on that occasion; I will not say he ran away from the division, but he did not record his vote. I now turn to another illustration of the same thing. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) made some rather strong assertions in a speech addressed to his constituents on the 14th October, 1887, in regard to the Mitchelstown affray. I will read to the House an extract from that speech. The right hon. Gentleman said on that occasion, after detailing the circumstances of the case:—

"The circumstances are very grave, and must be examined into and examined into in a very different way, and under different guarantees and securities from the way in which they were examined into at the Coroner's inquest. You must have a regular inquiry, and I await that inquiry, and I intend to suspend my judgment until that inquiry is fully and fairly held. It is impossible that justice can be satisfied without a full and impartial inquiry. The mind—I won't say of Ireland alone, but the mind of England and Scotland—the mind of Great Britain will not be satisfied without a complete and thorough inquiry. The Government would not be justified in attempting to prevent such an inquiry. It must be held, and I think we may go to the length of saying that it shall be held, because otherwise the Government will be accepting every accusation which, in the absence of an inquiry, would be levelled against them; but until that is done I am content in this matter to lay down the principle under which I think the thing should be judged. You must determine the action of the police to be innocent or culpable, according to the circumstances of each case. [A VOICE: The Government don't want to know more.] But we must make the Government know more. [A VOICE: But you won't.] Yes, but we will. ["No you won't."] Well, we shall see. It is a very hazardous thing to pronounce upon what people will do in the future. I think my Friend had better abstain from saying what I will do until he sees what I have done."

These words were uttered on the 14th October, 1887, and I think that not only the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman, but we who sit in this House, are entitled to see what the right hon. Gentleman has since done in the matter. These are only illustrations of what I consider, with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman's great and glaring divergencies between his utterances on the platform and his conduct in this House; and here I may state that this is not a personal matter. I should be ashamed to make it one. I have always been treated by the right hon. Gentleman with uniform courtesy; but this is a point which, in my judgment, touches the character of this House as a representative assembly. It was said more than a century ago, by the first William Pitt, before he became Lord Chatham:—

"If the country cannot place confidence in the promises and pledges of their representatives the power and authority of this House must fall."

I agree with this, and also with that very

strong sentence which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Morley), when he said the whole history of your Administration of Ireland—the way in which you obtained power, and the way in which you are keeping it—is a gross Parliamentary fraud. My mind and the minds of those I represent are made up on this subject. They and I fully agree with one other sentence which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard, in which he said the settlement of the question of the Government of Ireland was the great question of the present century. I have always thought it might be a long struggle, and have felt certain it would be a great one. Upon one other matter I desire to speak the minds of those I am sent here to represent. They desire me to oppose with vigour and persistence and by every legitimate means this ridiculous competition into which Her Majesty's Government has invited us, in the Queen's Speech, to enter against the great military nations of Europe; at the end of which, in my judgment, lies the Wolseley-cum-Chamberlain scheme of universal conscription. My constituents care nothing about the catalogue of sham proposals put forward by the Government. They believe that the settlement of this Question of the Government of Ireland is a vital and pressing matter. Relying not only on our principles, but on our mandate from the country, we feel perfectly sure that a clear and resolute policy such as ours is certain of ultimate success. People are too apt to look at the incidents of a great struggle, and to dwell on each particular, rather than mark the whole stream and tendency of things, and this great stream we say is in the direction which we, the Liberal Party, believe to be right. During the first 30 years of this century, both Houses of Parliament were breaking the Act of Union by taking from the Irish people the securities they had possessed. During the next 35 years there were some fitful gleams of light, for in the five years from 1835 to 1840, there was in Ireland under the administration of one of the most extraordinary men ever sent over to that country by us—the late Mr. Thomas Drummond—there was something like a time of just and fair government. During the last 30 years, mainly under the guidance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid-Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), we have been making great strides in the direction of justice. At the present moment there is a temporary reaction. The rump of the old Ascendancy Party, so well represented now by the hon. Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) and the hon. Member for South Tyrone (T. W. Russell) think they have found their man. Well, I would say that, if great dialectical skill, literary culture, and absolute indifference to the sufferings of humanity, so far as appears from his public conduct, go for anything, the right hon. Gentleman is eminently qualified to fill the position of the leader and defender of that particular section. We have no desire to enter into competition with the Party opposite in the system they are applying to the administration of Ireland. The Government need no longer fear any rivalry from the Liberal Party in the matter of coercion. We have abandoned all that and have found a more excellent way, which is by reposing that faith in the people which alone can give a sure foundation or strength to the Executive. We believe that power and responsibility must be joined. We look with sympathy on the efforts made by the great Leader of the Irish Nationalist Party to win the Irish people from unconstitutional methods. We sympathize with the sufferings of our Irish fellow-subjects, and we wish the hon. Member for Cork Godspeed in his endeavours. As far as we ourselves are concerned, we will never cease in the exertions we are making to secure a settlement of this question until we have helped him and the other hon. Gentlemen who have come across the Irish Sea with him to bring about what we ask in the words of the prayer used when we assemble together, namely, that which will tend to the uniting and knitting together of the hearts of the people of these realms, so that at the end of the nineteenth century we may see accomplished a true and real and lasting union between the people of Great Britain and Ireland.

*MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I desire in the few minutes I shall occupy the House to say something in answer to the references that have been made to myself by the hon.

Gentleman who has just sat down. I cannot think I have been so wholly wanting in my duties as a representative as the hon. Member has endeavoured to make out. The hon. Gentleman has referred to three illustrations, which he doubtless supposed were the most striking he could bring forward with regard to what he represents as my political tergiversation. He has referred to what I said in 1887 in regard to the Mitchelstown occurrence. On that occasion, speaking to my constituents, I stated that that was a very grave matter, and I thought it ought to be made the subject of an inquiry, and I was then certainly under the very strong impression that, considering what had been said in regard to that matter, the Leaders of the Opposition would have taken the course of moving for the issue of a Royal Commission, or some sort of independent Commission, to inquire into the whole business. Had such a Motion been made at that time, or in the following Session, I should have given it my support. I will further say I still regret that no such Motion was made, and that I expressed my astonishment and surprise that none of the leading members of the Liberal Party had thought fit to adopt such a course. I think that this Motion for an independent inquiry ought to have been pressed. I regret that it was not, and, although it has been overlayed by subsequent events, I still express my regret it was not moved for. Whenever the administration of the Government of Ireland is discussed in this House two totally adverse statements are made. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House make statements which are too frequently marked by palpable exaggeration so as not to command our confidence, and on the other side, statements are often made by the Chief Secretary and other members of the Government based upon the reports of persons who are incriminated. Why, then, when you have got a case of a serious character, which requires impartial investigation, do you not follow up the declarations which are made in the country by coming to the House and taking the Parliamentary course of moving for an inquiry?

MR. J. E. ELLIS: We will.

MR. COURTNEY: The hon. Member says "We will."

MR. J. E. ELLIS: I adopt the right hon. Gentleman's words.

MR. COURTNEY: Oh, yes. When I said "We will," I spoke with complete confidence, not I admit justified by what has since happened, that the responsible leaders of the Opposition would make the motion, which I for one would have supported. I do not see why we should not arrive at some method of getting more exactly at the facts, and abandon the process, which is extremely exciting to the popular imagination, of holding adverse meetings in huge halls, giving rise to great declamation on one side and great declamation on the other. Have you not got a *primâ facie* case on which to found a Motion for such an inquiry?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Where are we to get the facts?

MR. COURTNEY: If my right hon. Friend pleads inability to make any such Motion, I think he underrates his own powers. The next accusation made against me was with reference to declarations in my Election Address at the last General Election, that I thought local self-government must be given to Ireland. I have been for years in favour of extending local self-government to that country. I stated in my Election Address that I was of opinion than this was even more called for than was an extension of local government for England. I think so still, but I know the limits of Parliamentary power. I am very well aware, as my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Lothian must be, that it was impossible to carry a Local Government Bill for the three countries during one Session. I was quite confident last year that it would be impossible to carry a complete Local Government Bill for England, and the result proved that I was right. It is all very well for those who have no responsibility to say that the Bill should have been wider in its scope. The Opposition always says so, while those on the Government bench, knowing the limits of their own power, always reply, "We go as far as we can." I think that the impartial judgment of the future with respect to last Session of Parliament will be that the Local Government Bill for England and Wales did go as far as the capacity of Parliament would allow. My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle has said often and often that the Bill is

imperfect because it does not deal with district councils, and with local and and parochial matters. But he has answered himself. Very recently he commented on the slight attention that was paid to the London Government clauses. Is not this a confession that the Bill, even in its restricted and limited form, was too much to receive the close attention of the House of Commons? I would remind the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham that in the discussion on the second reading of the Local Government Bill for England, I protested against an indefinite postponement of the Irish Local Government Bill; and I will now say that if an attempt be made to indefinitely postpone that measure, I for one will not be silent. Perhaps, as I am referring to this subject, I may repeat something I said in the country. It had been said that a Local Government Bill could not be introduced so long as Ireland is in a disturbed condition. My answer to that is that Ireland as a whole is not disturbed. Why should we refuse local government to those parts which are quiet? I would suggest that a Bill should be introduced and made directly applicable to those parts which are at rest; or else that it should be applied to the whole of Ireland. power being taken to suspend its operation in any particular spot where its provisions are abused, just as Boards of Guardians are suspended. A Bill safeguarded in this way is asked for by the loyal and Unionist population [a laugh]. The hon. Member may laugh, but I would refer him to the "*Northern Whig*" which makes the demand.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, East): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to explain that I laughed at the suggestion that only Unionists in Ireland were to be allowed to carry on Local Government.

MR. COURTNEY: If the hon. Member gathered that view then, indeed, I expressed myself very imperfectly. The third point made by the hon. Member for the Rushcliff Division was a reference to what I said the other day at Oxford, and I am glad he referred to it for it enables me to restate it correctly. I have not the exact words, but the substance is that I recognized in Ireland a great system working of equity and justice; and it is supposed that I was satisfied therewith. This is an error. I recapitulated in detail the many drawbacks and shortcomings of the situation; and then I added that looking at Ireland as a whole I saw there, I believed that there prevailed in that country a great system working for equity and justice. I did not confound the Church Militant with the Church Triumphant; and I never suggested that Ireland showed us the Church Triumphant. But the system is waiting for right, and I uphold the present Government in its policy in Ireland, because, in spite of the imperfections of their agents—the Ministers who are responsible for the Administration of the country are perfectly conscious of those imperfections—in spite of the imperfections of the agents through whom it is necessary to work, and in spite of enormous difficulties, much aggravated by the attitude taken up by political parties in England, I believe that there is in Ireland a system working for equity and freedom, and an ever increasing attempt to give Ireland the same guarantee of independence as England possesses. Hon. Members below the Gangway do not show their capacity for establishing a Parliament in Ireland, nor their self-command by the manner in which they receive this expression of opinion. As far as I am concerned, I shall continue to do all I can to promote a system working for those ends, which I believe can only be secured by the maintenance of the one Parliament for the United Kingdom.

SIR HORACE DAVEY (Stockton): I am sure that no one who knows my right hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard can suppose for one moment that he is not capable of having the courage of his opinions. I am very glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman still holds that an inquiry into what occurred at Mitchelstown was necessary, and I only hope that we may have his assistance and that of his Friends on future Divisions when questions of a similar kind come before the House. Now I should like to ask what was meant by salutary effects? If I could detect any improvement, such as was alleged, in the pacification of Ireland, I should be the first to congratulate Her Majesty's Government, but it is exactly because the Administration of Ireland has, in our opinion, been of quite the contrary effect, because we believe it has been

irritating and exasperating, and tending to widen the alienation between the people of this country and the people of Ireland, that we could not allow the passage in question in the Address in answer to the gracious Speech from the Throne to pass without a word of protest from our side. The House ought to have had some information, documents, papers, statistics, from which it could form some opinion before it was asked to join in an expression of opinion such as that proposed. Able and interesting as was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, it appeared to me that in many respects he failed to meet the point made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, and that in some points he actually conceded the indictment against him. I ask the Government whether they think the storm of indignation which has been aroused by the personal indignities which have been inflicted upon certain Members is a salutary result of the administration of Irish affairs by them. At the bottom of this agitation I cannot help suspecting that there is a vague but a growing sense among the people that some of these Gentlemen, at least, have not been fairly treated, and that they are the subjects even of persecution, if not by, at least, with the assistance of, the Government; and in my opinion that vague but growing sense, which is gradually forming itself and seeking expression, is a factor in the political situation which the Government will have to deal with. I accept the statement, as I would accept any statement made by the Chief Secretary in the House, that the care and management of prisons is not within his department, but I ask the right hon. Gentleman, as the representative of the Executive Government in this House, to exercise the powers which are vested in the Lord Lieutenant under the 4th section of the Prisons Act of 1877. Why, it might be asked should the Government interfere in this case, and why should directions be given? It is because, it appears to me, that this is a matter of policy. I will assume, for the purpose of argument, that Mr. O'Brien, Mr. E. Harrington, and Mr. Carew have been rightly convicted of offences under the Crimes Act. Sir, I do not care to discuss the question whether prisoners thus convicted can be properly termed political offenders. That is to my mind a question of a more or less academic character. But it cannot be questioned that the offences of which they have been convicted have directly arisen out of the political controversies of the day conducted in this House and outside this House, and that the Gentlemen against whom the powers of the Crimes Act are set in force are the political and Parliamentary opponents of the Government. I agree, Sir, with the right hon. Gentleman that the law should be no respecter of persons. I would never say anything to the contrary. But it seems to me, Sir, that this question should be dealt with as a question of expediency—a question of policy. What would be the course of a wise Government in a case such as this? I venture to submit, Sir, that a wise Government in administering the law would have regard to the ends for which the punishment is inflicted and to its effect, not only upon the offender himself, but on the people amongst whom the law is to be administered. Is it wise, prudent, or statesmanlike to attach the personal indignities which have been spoken of to these particular offenders? Is it not calculated rather to weaken respect for the law than to strengthen it? Will it not rather retard and postpone any permanent establishment of order? Is it desirable to encourage this state of things? This seems to me to be the real issue of this question, the issue which, I understand, my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle tenders to the House. If, as I believe, the Executive Government of Ireland has the most ample power of relieving these Gentlemen from these indignities, I beg of them to assure the House that the power will be exercised with some regard to public opinion, not, Sir, because public opinion is entitled to override the law—I do not wish it to be understood that I would say anything of the kind—but because, in my opinion, the effect of punishment is marred, and the true end of punishment is missed if punishment is accompanied with incidents which shock the public conscience. If you inflict punishment with incidents which shock public opinion and the public conscience, you are more likely to create a sympathy with those who break the law than with the law itself. If the Chief Secretary desires some justification or desires some reason for exercising the discretion which, in

my opinion, the Government has in this matter, I will take the liberty of referring him again to the 49th section of the Prisons Act, 1879, which prescribes "That every prisoner under sentence inflicted on conviction for sedition or seditious libel shall be treated as a misdemeanant of the first division." A great many of the prisoners who have been convicted would, if there were no Crimes Act, and if they were tried in the ordinary way—in a constitutional way, and in the way in which they ought to be tried, namely, by judge and jury, be tried for sedition or seditious libel, and if they were so tried and convicted, they would be entitled to be treated as misdemeanants of the first class. I will not incur the right hon. Gentleman's criticism by saying anything about what he has called the distinguished man or the popular man argument. Although it is entitled to very considerable weight, it is an argument which is not conclusive. It is entitled to very considerable weight for the reason which I have just mentioned, namely, that the infliction of these personal indignities upon men who are so much respected, and so much beloved by a large majority of their countrymen, and have earned the respectful admiration of a great many people in England and Scotland, is calculated to increase the alienation of the people from the law. There are at present 22 Members of the House who are either in prison [An hon. MEMBER: 25]—25 Members either either in prison or out on bail awaiting the result of appeals. Who are they? They are men who have been sent up to this House in obedience to Her Majesty's writ, to serve in Parliament as representatives of counties and boroughs in Ireland. They are men whose votes in this House might at any time determine the fate of a Ministry on the most momentous issues of Imperial policy, even the issues of war and peace. Do hon. Members opposite think that when these Gentlemen come out of prison they will be less respected or admired by the majority of their countrymen? Do you not rather think that the infliction of these personal indignities will be an additional title on their part to the confidence, respect, and affection of the people; and, if so, I venture to say, as a mere matter of policy or expediency, it is neither wise nor statesmanlike to unnecessarily inflict these indignities upon these Gentlemen. The only object of inflicting personal indignities upon prisoners is to mark the moral degradation to which they have sunk. But if it ceases to have that effect then it becomes inexpedient and impolitic. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the success which has attended the Crimes Act. I was very much surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman quote in this House the Report of some anonymous barrister of what has been said by some Judge on some occasion in some case without any context whatever. I hardly think the House will be disposed to accept the Report of the anonymous barrister even on the right hon. Gentleman's guarantee. But the right hon. Gentleman went beyond that; he gave some statistics which seem more fallacious than figures usually are. He told us that of the ordinary Civil cases which come before Courts of Appeal 26½ per cent. succeed. Well, I know something about appeals, and I was surprised to hear that the average was not higher. I would have expected that it would be about 50 per cent. Under the Crimes Act it appears that the successful appeals are only 8 per cent.; but having regard to the nature of these cases, which turn not so much on questions of law, but on questions of fact, I wonder that the percentage is even so high. The House must remember that it is in the smaller cases, in which sentences of one month only are inflicted that the greatest injustice is done under the Crimes Act, these being cases in which there is no appeal. The right hon. Gentleman said that juries convicted in a larger number of cases than magistrates. I have no doubt that is so, and simply because those who have charge of prosecutions are not quite so ready to bring cases before the test of a jury as they are to bring them before the resident magistrates, from whom it is presumably more easy to obtain convictions. The right hon. Gentleman also stated that no one alleges that the prisoners convicted are not all rightly convicted. But that is an entire misapprehension. Owing to the difficulty of obtaining any certain information from the inadequate reports in the newspapers, and the great difficulty of obtaining the detailed facts of any case, it is not easy to point to any individual case and assert that in that case there has been a wrongful conviction. I would be no party to attacking any

decision of a tribunal unless I was quite sure of my facts. Nevertheless, I cannot acquiesce in the optimistic view of the Chief Secretary that all the convictions are legally justified. I will tell the House where the cases under the Crimes Act seem to me to be most faulty. I had not the honour of a seat in the House when the Act was passed, but the great defect, the great blot in the system introduced by the Act seemed to me to be that it left to persons of insufficient training and legal experience the adjudication on two branches of law of so elastic and ill-defined a character as the law of conspiracy and the law relating to unlawful assembly. Cases of this kind are peculiarly fitted to be tried by juries, and I do not think that any jury would find shopkeepers who combined together guilty of conspiracy because they refused to supply a person with goods which, in fact, he did not require, and only asked for so as to make a case for prosecution. There was one circumstance about the Milltown Malbay cases which threw a lurid light upon the administration of the Crimes Act, and that was that the police were employed by the Divisional Magistrate for the purpose of creating offences. I admit that since the decision in the Killeagh case there has been a great improvement in the way in which Resident Magistrates have dealt with this question. This is no doubt a salutary result; but it is due, not to the action of the Government in administering the Statutes, but to the course adopted by the hon. Member for Longford, in bringing the case before the superior Courts. The right hon. Gentleman asks the House to believe that all the convictions under the Crimes Act are right. Let me say a word or two with reference to the crime of unlawful assembly. It appears to me that in Ireland, whenever two or three people meet together, they form an unlawful assembly. In one case some people who had collected round a bonfire were dispersed by the police as an unlawful assembly. Perhaps the most remarkable case which has come under my notice occurred at Waterford, and was reported in the *Freeman's Journal*. A charge of intimidation was preferred against 14 persons in a Court held under the provisions of the Crimes Act. Evidence was given that the defendants and a crowd stopped opposite the house of a man named Power, and shouted "Grabber." Power declined to give evidence, declaring that he had suffered more from the police than the people. Thirteen of the defendants were acquitted; but the fourteenth was convicted, and sentenced to one month's imprisonment. It is new to me that one man out of 14 can constitute an unlawful assembly or a riot. Perhaps some explanation may be given of the extraordinary cases mentioned by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division (Mr. J. E. Ellis). Certainly if such cases occurred in Ireland, they are a gross abuse of the law. In my opinion, the constant irritating interference of the police is calculated to weaken, rather than to strengthen, respect for the law and respect for the people who administer it. I do not hestitate to say that Ireland is one of the most—perhaps the most—police-ridden countries in Europe; and, therefore, I ask whether we are justified in addressing Her Majesty in language of gratulation respecting the state of the country. In his observations upon the Gweedore case and the murder of District Inspector Martin, the Chief Secretary seemed a little to miss the point of my right hon. Friend's remarks. The Chief Secretary said there was a grievous error of judgment committed by those who had charge of the police in the locality in not having a sufficient body of men present at the arrest of Father M'Fadden. But that was not the point of my right hon. Friend's observations. The Chief Secretary did not answer the question "Who gave the order to arrest Father M'Fadden on Sunday as he came from the celebration of Mass?" The point of the case, the light it shows on the tact and judgment of those who have the administration of the law in Ireland seems to me to lie in this, the mistake made—to put it at its least—in arresting a popular, a beloved priest just when he had taken off his vestments on leaving the altar, in the midst of an excited congregation leaving chapel. It is unnecessary for me to say that I do not excuse or palliate for a moment the brutal murder of District Inspector Martin; and I am quite sure the Leaders of the Nationalist Party in Ireland can only regard a deplorable incident of this kind as calculated to do grave injury to the cause they are agitating for. But I do say that whoever it was who was

responsible for the order to arrest Father M'Fadden coming straight from chapel, where he had been celebrating Mass, in the midst of an irritated and excited congregation, incurred a very grave responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman said nothing in his speech of the case quoted by my right hon. Friend of the two men convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for laughing at a policeman named Cole. But let me say a word as to the case of Mr. Edward Harrington. I have here the newspaper report of the *Cork Herald*. I do not from that report draw the same inference as the Chief Secretary, but at least it is clear that three charges were made against Mr. Harrington—one of attending the meeting, one for making a speech there, and another for publishing that speech in a newspaper. Of the two first he was not convicted, but of the publication alone. It may be that my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division stated the case too strongly when he said the Magistrates had declared the speech innocent; but this I point to, that the sentence was pronounced six months' hard labour for the offence of publishing the speech in a newspaper. I do not see the relevancy of saying he might have been convicted of making the speech if the evidence had been stronger; it is enough to say he was convicted simply for the publication, and the punishment was inflicted for that alone. The Chief Secretary thinks it is not unduly severe, because he might have been convicted of the other charges; but the conviction shows me, and must show any fair-minded man who considers it, there is truth in what we have been often told, that the Act creates a new crime. I am quite aware I shall incur the censure of a noble and learned Lord in "another place," for whom I have the greatest respect, when I say so; but I am fortified by the opinion of two respected Judges of the High Court in Ireland. I would ask any hon. Member to say under what Statute or Common Law a man might have been convicted and punished for publishing a speech where it had not been found that the speech itself was seditious, libellous, or otherwise unlawful. It will be answered, It was in a proclaimed district. Then I say the act only became a crime by virtue of the Crimes Act. When I hear it said that no new crime was created by the Crimes Act, it seems to me that the case of Mr. Harrington is a complete answer to that. The right hon. Gentleman gave us rather a rose-coloured view of the present state of Ireland. If he had continued much longer, he would have pictured the country in a state of Arcadian happiness. What would be the obvious sequence, the natural political consequence, if the state of Ireland were as he describes it? We should expect to see in the Queen's Speech the announcement that the Government were now ready to fulfil the pledges so many Members on the other side gave to their constituents, that Ireland should have equal legislation with England, that the Government were at once prepared to bring in a Local Government Bill for Ireland. But he said, with perhaps a foreboding of what may not be so far in the dim and distant future as some people think, if the constituencies return my right hon. Friend to power how are you prepared to deal with this Irish problem? I have not the slightest hesitation in answering. I should say instead of continuing the heavy hand of coercion, which has only alienated respect for law and widened and deepened the separation between England and Ireland, I should say, place responsibility on the shoulders of those whom you yourselves say have the greatest political power in Ireland. Political power without responsibility in a free country is a danger to the State, and so long as that continues will danger accompany it. I should also answer this. Deal at once with the question of arrears, because it lies at the bottom of this question. Anybody who takes the trouble to read or who has watched the progress of events that have harrowed the feelings of so many people in this country will have seen that in almost every instance they arose from the inability of the tenant and landlord to come to an agreement on the question of arrears. In most cases the landlords were willing to make some concession, though not to the extent the tenants asked. What would be the sensible thing to do? Why, that some tribunal, the Land Commission or some other, should deal with the question of arrears in some way similar to the method pursued in the Crofters' Act, or in some way of arbitration between the parties. If it had not been for the

refusal to deal with arrears except in a manner that found no acceptance on either side, many of these events might have been altogether prevented. Anybody who has studied the question will confirm me when I say that the greater number of prosecutions under the Crimes Act have directly or indirectly arisen from the failure of Parliament to deal with arrears. In the first place, the powers of the Crimes Act are used to prevent combinations of tenants to obtain reductions of rent; then comes eviction, and people are prosecuted under the Crimes Act for resisting eviction; then these too noisy sympathizers are prosecuted for unlawful assembly, and when they come out of prison they are met by bands and processions, and greeted with bonfire displays; then there are more charges of the police, more unlawful assembly, and more persons convicted of crimes. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford has traced out of one eviction the ultimate punishment of 48 persons. If Parliament had dealt with arrears in a timely and suitable manner these questions would not arise. In discussing these cases it is impossible not to trench sometimes on personal grounds, but I desire the House should understand that we who advocate this Amendment attack the system and the way in which the system is administered. The Government have undertaken, what I believe to be an impossible task, to govern under the form of democracy, but by the method of despotism. There are two ways of governing Ireland. You may suspend Parliamentary representation, and govern Ireland as a Crown Colony would be governed, with the aid of your military and police. That is a conceivable mode of governing Ireland. As to whether it is possible I do not express an opinion. Or you may frankly accept the situation and place responsibility in the hands of those who are politically powerful in Ireland, and govern Ireland on democratic principles. But I deny that a mongrel despotism, under the form of democracy, will ever succeed in Ireland or in any other country in the world. I must say that when the Under Secretary charges us with want of respect for the law, and says the issue is between law and disorder, I must say that there are certain friends of his to whom that might apply. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh I observe made a speech the other day—I believe he intends to follow me—in which he said that if Parliament passed a certain Act he was prepared to put himself at the head of 50,000 or 100,000 men to resist that Act. What an example is that to set the peasants of Ireland, when a distinguished and gallant Member uses such language in addressing his constituents! I was surprised to hear the hon. Member for Stockport also offer counsel that seemed to me extremely like counsel of rebellion. I know the hon. Member is a peaceful man, but, certainly, under the ordinary interpretation of language, he seemed to counsel rebellion against the constituted authorities. That there is an improvement in the material prospects of Ireland I do not deny, but when I am asked to congratulate Her Majesty on the material improvement of Ireland as the salutary result of certain Statutes, I am bound to say that so far as my observation goes I can see no ground for tracing any improvement in the social disease in that part of the United Kingdom, and I decline to be a party to congratulating Her Majesty on the result of Statutes which, in my opinion, have had the effect of weakening, not of strengthening, respect for the laws, and of widening the breach between the English and Irish people.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned," — (*Colonel Saunderson,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate further adjourned till to-morrow.

MOTIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. M'Lagan, Bill to enable owners and occupiers in burghs, wards of burghs, parishes, and districts in Scotland to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors, or otherwise to have effectual control over the drink traffic within such areas, ordered to be brought in by Mr. M'Lagan, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Lyell, Mr. Mackintosh, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Stewart, Dr. Clark, Mr. Munro Ferguson, and Mr. Wilson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 98.]

TRUCK AMENDMENT ACT (1887) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Haldane, Bill to amend "The Truck Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Haldane and Mr. Munro Ferguson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 99.]

FAIRS AND MARKETS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. William Redmond, Bill to amend the laws relating to Fairs and Markets in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Crilly, Mr. Thomas Gill, and Mr. M'Cartan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 100.]

AGRICULTURAL TENANCIES RATING BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill to divide rates between Landlord and Tenant, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. C. T. Dyke Acland, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Handel Cossham, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, and Mr. Halley Stewart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 101.]

PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Ellis, Bill to give further facilities for the acquisition of Sites for Places of Worship, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Alexander M'Arthur, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 102.]

ACCUMULATIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Neville, Bill to amend the Law relating to Accumulations, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Neville and Mr. Cozens Hardy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 103.]

CANAL DEVELOPMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Philip Stanhope, Bill to provide for the Development of Canals in the United Kingdom, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Philip Stanhope, Mr. Robert Reid, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Brunner, and Mr. Ernest Spencer.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 104.]

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Campbell, Bill to amend the Law relating to Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Campbell, Mr. Finlay, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Mark Stewart, and Mr. Thorburn.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 105.]

LAND CHARGES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Penrose FitzGerald, Bill to facilitate the re-adjustment and redemption of Charges on Land in Ireland; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Penrose FitzGerald, Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Smith Barry, Colonel Waring, Sir James Corry, and Sir Charles Lewis.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 106.]

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON ELECTIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Maple, Bill to alter the Divisions of London for the Election of the School Board, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Maple, Sir Richard Temple, Sir Algernon Borthwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Richard Chamberlain, and Mr. Baumann.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 107.]

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Keeffe, Bill to amend the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'Keeffe, Mr. Parnell, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Sexton, Mr. William O'Brien, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

Bill presented, and read first time. Bill 108.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Baumann, Bill to amend "The Factory and Workshop Act, 1878," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Baumann Mr. Staveley Hill, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Knowles.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 109.]

DEFENCE OF BRITISH AND IRISH INDUSTRIES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill for the Defence of British and Irish Industry, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Charles Gray, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Norris, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Farquharson, Mr. Byron Reed, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Dixon-Hartland, and Mr. Baumann.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 110.]

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howard Vincent, Bill for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Warmington, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Bradlaugh, and Mr. Hozier.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 111.]

PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Clancy, Bill to amend the Law relating to the registration of Parliamentary Voters in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Clancy, Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. M'Cartan, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 112.]

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tuite, Bill to amend University Education in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tuite, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Crilly, Mr. Biggar, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Mac Neill, Mr. Dillon, Dr. Fox, Mr. Thomas Gill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Clancy, Dr. Kenny, and Mr. T. M. Healy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 113.]

ACCESS TO MOUNTAINS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bryce, Bill to secure to the Public the right of Access to Mountains and Moorlands in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bryce, Mr. J. C. Bolton, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Donald Crawford, Dr. Farquharson, and Sir Henry Roscoe.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 114.]

GUARDIANS OF THE POOR QUALIFICATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Qualification of Guardians of the Poor, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Walter M'Laren, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 115.]

House adjourned at Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 4.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 6.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 26th February, 1889.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON REFORMATORIES AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS, 1883.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

*LORD NORTON, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government how soon they hoped the Bill they had prepared on the Report of the Royal Commission on Reformatories and Industrial Schools, 1883, might be introduced as promised in that House, said: My Lords, the Royal Commission on Reformatories and Industrial Schools was presided over by Lord Aberdare, and during two years bestowed very great labour upon their investigations both here and in circuit through the three kingdoms. Lord Aberdare, some two years ago, expressed his sense of the great importance of immediate action on the subject, and I know that a Bill has been prepared in the Home Office for the past two years. The Bill is not only important by way of consolidating the great many Acts on the subject, which are now very confused, but also in the interest of the Treasury, and in the far higher interests of the community in general, and of the moral responsibility of parents of the lower class towards their children. The abuses of the existing law are such that unless they are checked the whole system should be discontinued. I may mention, in illustration of that view, that there are cases in which parents have been known to ask how to qualify their children for a reformatory. Negligent and disreputable parents appreciate the advantages they get in sending their children to these schools regardless of the criminal life by which they so get rid of them. In Scotland there is this other kind of abuse, that the Pauper Schools are emptied into Industrial Schools, by which means the charge for neglected children is imposed upon the Treasury instead of upon the rates. These are some of the abuses which it is equally important, in the interests of the Treasury and in those of the community, should be remedied without further delay. No doubt the delay has been caused during the past five years by the Home Secretary wishing to introduce his own measure in the other House, where business has been so much impeded. If, however, the Bill is introduced in your Lordships' House, it will meet, I am sure, with fair discussion, and I venture to hope it will have so rapid a passage that it may get to the other House in time to secure its passing into law in the present Session.

EARL BROWNLOW: My Lords, the Question asked by the noble Lord in the course of last Session, and the Report of the Royal Commission which was presented to the House, naturally aroused during the Recess considerable interest among those who were familiar with the question of Reformatory and Industrial Schools, and it is only natural that a number of applications should have been made to Her Majesty's Government on the subject. My Lords, although the Government do not see any reason to interfere with the principle, or to alter the details of the measure in any material point, still there are a number of small points which have been brought before the Government which they consider important. For the purpose of introducing these matters, a Bill has been sent to the Government draftsman, and is now in his office. I can

assure the noble Lord that there will be no delay whatever in bringing it forward; it will be presented to the House the moment it is out of the draftsman's office. I fear it is impossible for me to name any exact day under the circumstances, but I hope that by the week after next the Bill will be in a proper state to be brought forward in your Lordships' House.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 26th February, 1889.

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS.

Ordered, That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee, not exceeding nine Members, to whom shall be referred all Private Bills promoted by Municipal and other Local Authorities, by which it is proposed to create powers relating to police and sanitary regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or are repugnant to, the general law.

Ordered, That Standing Order 173A be applicable to all Bills referred to the said Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum of the Committee.—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

QUESTIONS.

CONSOLS AND REDUCED.

SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): I beg to ask the Chancellor of Exchequer, with reference to the announcement in the Queen's Speech as regards Consols and Reduced, whether it is proposed to convert the whole at the expiration of the notice—namely, on the 6th of July; or, if not, what course it is intended to pursue?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes, Sir; it is the intention of the Government that the whole amount of Three per Cent. Consols and Reduced outstanding shall either be paid off or converted at the expiration of the notice.

INDIA—NUTHOO WILSON.

MR. C. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State has yet received any information as to the case of Nuthoo Wilson, now a prisoner at Tehri Gurwhal; and, whether he can lay upon the Table the Report on the case of Nuthoo Wilson, recently made by Mr. Reed, Commissioner at Kumaon?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR INDIA (Sir J. E. GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has called for a Report, but there has not yet been sufficient time for its arrival.

THE NEW MAGAZINE RIFLE.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any, and if any, how many, patents for inventions adopted in the new magazine rifle, stand in the names of Government officials, or servants, and how many in the names of other persons; whether he has made full inquiry into the validity of these patents, especially those standing in the names of persons not in the Government service; and, whether any sum has been decided upon as the price or acknowledgment to be paid for the several patents; and, if so, what is the amount in each case?

MR. E. STANHOPE: There are alleged patents connected with parts of the new magazine rifle. A very full inquiry as to their validity will be made before any question of payment or compensation for rights under them will be considered. At present I do not admit that there are any patents connected with parts of the new rifle which give anyone a claim to compensation.

MR. HANBURY: Is it not the fact that the War Office made application to the Treasury to pay the sum of very nearly £60,000?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No; certainly not.

IRELAND—THE CROWN WITNESS CULLINANE.

MR. COX (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant whether Cullinane, the informer, is still in the employment of the Government in Ireland; and, if so, whether

facilities will be given to the solicitor for the defence at the Special Commission to have a subpœna served on that person?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Assuming that this question relates to the witness who gave evidence against the murderers of Head Constable Whelehan, the man neither was nor is in the employment of the Government in Ireland.

MR. COX: Did this man not swear, both at the investigation at Ennis and at the trial at Wicklow, that he was for years in the pay of the Government?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have given the information I have obtained, and I believe it is correct. If the hon. Gentleman has any doubt in the matter, and will repeat his Question another day, I will endeavour to answer it.

MR. COX: Certainly, I will repeat it.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W. R., Holmfirth): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant by what means, in the absence of distinguishing numbers, a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who may be wanted as a witness or defendant in legal proceedings, can be identified; whether any instructions exist requiring the men and officers of the constabulary to give assistance in the identification of members of that body for the purpose of such proceedings; and whether there is any objection to the English practice in regard to distinguishing numbers being introduced among the Irish Constabulary?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary reports, with regard to paragraphs 1 and 2, that every member of the force who may be wanted in the circumstances mentioned is bound to give his name when asked, and his officers or his comrades are bound to give assistance if required; and as regards paragraph 3, that he is not of opinion that any necessity exists for assigning distinguishing numbers throughout the force generally, and that any attempt to keep up any general system of such numbers would prove extremely embarrassing, in view of the removals of men both in bodies and as individuals constantly taking place in all parts of Ireland.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Have not the Dublin Metropolitan Police distinguishing marks; do they not wear numbers and also letters of the alphabet?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I stated the other day that in several of the large towns the police have distinguishing marks.

MR. MAC NEILL: Why is the distinction maintained in towns, and not in the country?

IRISH PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what has been the entire cost of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works; and whether any fees, and, if any, to what amount, have been paid to any Commissioner for his services on that Commission?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The cost of the Commission, as charged on the Temporary Commissions Vote, has been £10,814. Payments amounting to a further sum of about £900 have been made from other Votes for stationery, printing, &c. Three of the Commissioners rèceived remuneration at the rate of ten guineas a working day, as stated in the Estimates for 1887-88, page 502.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: Were the names of the Commissioners stated?

MR. JACKSON: I do not remember whether the names of the Commissioners were stated in the Estimate, but, of course, the names of the Commissioners are well known.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I want to know the names of the Commissioners who were paid. There were certain of them who were not paid. I understand from the hon. Gentleman's reply that three of the Commissioners were paid 10 guineas a day. I want to know their names.

MR. JACKSON: There were four Commissioners altogether. Mr. Pim, one of the Commissioners, was not paid.

THE ROYAL BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

MR. LAMBERT (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Royal Lancaster Regiment asked to be

allowed to move from the Royal Barracks to Beggar's-bush Barracks, Dublin, when the Liverpool Regiment left there on February 11; whether permission was refused, and whether the Seaforth Highlanders, from Glasgow, were sent to Beggar's-bush Barracks because a guarantee had been given that no fresh troops should be put in the Royal Barracks; and whether, owing to this guarantee, it is intended to keep the Royal Lancaster Regiment for the whole of its term in Dublin, in barracks which are insanitary, uncomfortable, and unfit for habitation?

MR. E. STANHOPE: As a result of the promise that no fresh troops should be moved into the Royal Barracks, the request of the Lancaster Regiment was refused. The General Commanding reports that during the ten months the Lancaster Regiment has been in the Royal Barracks it has been particularly healthy. That steps are being taken to put the barracks into a thoroughly sanitary condition is well known.

MR. LAMBERT: Will the Royal Lancaster Regiment stay there during their whole term?

MR. STANHOPE: I would rather not answer that at present. I will take immediate steps to avert any danger that may be likely to arise.

MR. MAC NEILL: Do I understand that, during the last ten months, the Royal Barracks have been particularly healthy?

MR. STANHOPE: What I said was that the Royal Lancaster Regiment, who have been in the Royal Barracks, have been in a particularly healthy state.

THE DUNGARVAN UNION.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant whether the Local Government Board intend to direct the discontinuance in office of the paid Guardians of the Dungarvan Union in time to allow the re-election of a Board of Guardians on the 26th of March next, and give the ratepayers a voice in the levying and expenditure of the rates?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Local Government Board would not feel justified in discontinuing the Vice Guardians of Dungarvan Union next month, as the proceedings of the elected Guardians who were displaced in October last for jobbery and corruption were such as to render it inadvisable to restore them to office at present. I may add that memorials signed by very influential persons in the Union have been received, praying that the services of the Vice Guardians may be retained.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General when the new Regulations relating to the Post Office Savings Banks will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): The subject to which the hon. Member refers has not been lost sight of; but I have thought it well to postpone the introduction of any further regulations until opportunity has been given to observe the working of the regulations which were laid on the Table of the House last year, in order to see what alterations in matters of detail may be most desirable. The hon. Member called my attention towards the close of last Session to the inconvenience likely to be caused by one of the regulations respecting the signatures of Trustees of Friendly Societies. Arrangements have consequently been made under which withdrawals from the funds of Friendly Societies can be effected on the signature of two Trustees.

MR. HOWELL: Can arrangements be made whereby Members of the House can have copies of the new regulations?

MR. RAIKES: I will inquire: I should be very glad if that could be done.

BELFAST TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware of the dissatisfaction which has been caused by the removal of the telegraph office from Waring Street, Belfast; and whether, considering the great inconvenience of the present arrangement, he will take steps to have a telegraph office established in connection with the new post office there?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES): The branch post office and telegraph office in Waring Street, Belfast, was closed on the 31st of August, 1886, when, by the removal of the head post office to Royal Avenue, a new tele-

graph office was opened about 400 yards off. A memorial for the establishment of telegraph business at the present receiving office in Waring Street has recently been received and is now under inquiry.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. CAREW.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether Mr. Carew, M.P., a prisoner under the Crimes Act in Kilkenny Gaol, still refuses to wear the convict garb; whether his left arm, shoulder, and hip have been injured by the violence inflicted upon him by a body of warders in stripping him of his clothes on his arrival at the prison last week; and what is the legal authority for stripping Mr. Carew by violence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: 1. Mr. Carew still refuses to wear the prison dress. 2. Mr. Carew admits that his resistance to the removal of his clothes and the putting on of the prison dress was very violent, and considerable force had in consequence to be used in enforcing compliance on his part with the rules, but the Governor, who was present, states the force used was not greater than the circumstances rendered necessary. Mr. Carew complains that his left shoulder and right hip were strained in the struggle, but the only mark of injury now perceptible is a scratch on the back of his right hand, and the medical officer, who examined him immediately after the occurrence as well as on the following day, states that he found no other mark of injury of any sort. 3. Section 13 of 19 and 20 Vict., cap. 68, and Rule 28 of the Local Prison Rules, which latter requires that "a convicted criminal prisoner shall be provided with a complete prison dress and shall be required to wear it." These provisions carry with them, in the opinion of the Board, a legal authority to do whatever is reasonably necessary to give effect to them.

MR. SEXTON: In reference to the explanation the right hon. Gentleman has just given, I beg to ask him whether Rule 58 of the Prison Rules authorizes the Governor, in case of disobedience, to punish a prisoner by close confinement for any time not exceeding 24 hours and by being kept on bread and water; whether Rule 59 prescribes that a man may be punished by confinement in a prison cell; what Rule authorizes the application of physical violence to a prisoner to compel him to strip himself of his clothes and to put other clothes on; and, in view of the enormous number of Rules directing that nothing shall be done to injure any prisoner in body or mind, and Mr. Carew having been continuously six days and nights on a plank bed, how long the right hon. Gentleman intends to keep my hon. Friend in this condition?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member asks me a series of Questions without notice. In his last Question he asks how long I intend to allow Mr. Carew to remain in his present condition. I have only in reply to say that this is a question entirely for the medical officer of the prison to decide. The medical officer of the prison, I have no doubt, will exercise the closest and most careful supervision over Mr. Carew's health. I have not the slightest doubt that he will see that no injury is done to Mr. Carew's health. With regard to the legal question in the earlier part of the hon. Member's interrogatories, legal opinions have been given over and over again. I have been advised that the prison authorities were acting properly, in accordance both with the spirit and the letter of the Statute, in exercising such force as unfortunately might be necessary to compel obedience to the prison rules. Nor can I conceive that anyone who desires the comfort of Mr. Carew himself would desire to substitute for that amount of force solitary confinement, or putting upon bread and water.

MR. SEXTON: In view of the rules of the Prisons Board declaring that punishment for disobedience shall be one of three things—close confinement, bread and water, or the punishment cell—I ask the right hon. Gentleman to cite for me any rule which justifies the use of physical force.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member appears to speak under a misapprehension. No punishment has been inflicted upon Mr. Carew. Such force only was used as was absolutely necessary to enforce obedience to the Prison Rules. If I rightly understand the hon. Gentleman, he desires that punishment should be inflicted.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to say whether there is any truth in the statement in to-day's papers that Mr. Carew, instead of having a plank bed, has been supplied with a palliasse and mattress?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not received information to that effect, but I have no doubt that the statement is true.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny S.): May I ask whether the same medical officer is attending Mr. Carew who allowed Larkin, one of Lord Clanricarde's tenants, to die unattended in his cell?

No answer was given.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask whether the prison rule which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has quoted relating to hair-cutting does not refer to females; and whether the regulations as to male prisoners are not that the hair shall not be closer than is necessary for health and cleanliness? I also have to ask whether it is for that purpose that the hair of these hon. Gentlemen was cut by violence immediately after their admission; and whether it is not the fact that no Member of Parliament had his hair cut in prison last year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot, without further notice, add anything to the answer which I gave to the hon. Gentleman. I understand that the practice in Ireland is precisely the same as it is England. If it can be shown that it is materially different, I will engage that the difference shall be removed.

MR. SEXTON: Why was the rule not carried out last year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is misinformed.

MR. SHEEHY (Galway, S.): If my learned Friend is misinformed, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman when was my hair cut off?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid the hon. Member did not do me the honour to listen to my answer. What I stated was that the practice of clipping hair in Irish prisons did not begin in October last, as some persons think. I believe there were three or four cases in which the hair was not clipped. No doubt the hon. Member who has just spoken was an exception if he says so. No doubt he is very competent to give information upon that point. But in all cases the exception is made at the instance of the governor or the doctor of the prison.

MR. SHEEHY: I wish to ask whether the governor or the doctor ever asked that my hair should be clipped?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the hon. Member refer to the Prisons Board? I presume that neither the doctor nor the governor would refer to the Prisons Board, seeing that it is a matter which is left to the discretion of the doctor, and no other authority is required.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the statements reported to have been made by Lord Compton to the electors of Barnsley, alleging that the effect of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act has been to increase the rates for goods and minerals, and the terminal charges of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway and the Great Northern Railway, and that schedules have been submitted for the approval of the Board of Trade for still higher rates, amounting in the case of coal to 3s. per ton; and whether such statements were founded upon fact?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: My attention has been called to the statements by the Question of my hon. Friend. I think they are based upon an entire misconception of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of last Session, and the difference between the maximum rates and the rates actually charged. If a Railway Company desires to raise the rates actually charged, it can only do so, since the Act came into operatian, by giving public notice, which would be sent to the Board of Trade. I am not aware that this Railway Company has done so. In regard to the maximum rates, they, of course, have sent in a schedule, as other companies have done, according to the provisions of the Act. Those maximum rates must be compared, not with the rates actually charged by them, but with their statutory powers, and, of course, they will be subjected to the revision of the Board of Trade and of Parliament.

COLONIAL CONSTITUTIONS.

MR. F. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for the Colonies when the Return relating to Colonial Constitutions, ordered on the 9th March, 1888, to be printed, will be issued to Members?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The papers are in the printers' hands, and will be distributed shortly.

THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for India when Her Majesty's Home Government or the Government of India propose to announce the action they intend to take upon the recommendations contained in the recently issued Report of the Indian Public Service Commission; and whether the Government contemplate making any alteration in the age at which candidates are admissible to compete for appointments in the Indian Civil Service?

SIR J. GORST: The Secretary of State is unable to name any precise date upon which the consideration of this important Report, which is now proceeding, will be concluded and a decision arrived at. No time has been or will be lost in determining how far effect can be given to the recommendations of the Commission. The alteration of age, as recommended by the Commission, is one of the matters under consideration.

MR. BRYCE: Is it the expectation of the Government that some declaration will be made on the subject during the present Session of Parliament?

SIR JOHN GORST: In a matter of this kind, the Secretary of State cannot bind himself to a particular time. The matter is of immense importance, and the greatest possible attention will be paid to it, both at home and in India, and a decision will be arrived at as speedily as possible.

LAW OFFICERS AND PRIVATE PRACTICE.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government, in accordance with the pledge given by him on 12th November, 1888, have examined into the question of the position of the Law Officers of the Crown in regard to their taking private practice; and whether they have come to any conclusion on the subject?

MR. W. H. SMITH: There has not been time to give consideration to the matter to which the hon. Gentleman refers. He will remember I said it was one of considerable difficulty.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake to examine into the matter, and give the House his decision before the Estimates come on?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot give a positive undertaking, but I certainly will endeavour to examine into the subject.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF MEMBERS.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland by whose direction Mr. E. Harrington, M.P., Mr. W. O'Brien, M.P., and Mr. Carew, M.P., were, on being admitted to prison, subjected to the indignity of having their hair cut off; and whether this course has been sanctioned by the Prisons Board; why a distinction was made in this respect between these Members and other Members of Parliament and others who have been previously committed to prison under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and whether the prison rules justify such action otherwise than for the purpose of enforcing cleanliness?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was by no special direction, but in accordance with ordinary prison rules, that the hair was clipped. I understand the Rule is as follows:—

> "No. 35. Each male prisoner shall have his beard clipped or be shaved at least once a week, unless specially exempted by the governor or surgeon. . . . The hair of male criminal prisoners shall not be cut closer than may be necessary for purposes of health and cleanliness."

The distinction made in the cases referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was therefore due to special exemptions by the governor or medical officer. The rule and practice is precisely the same as that which obtains in England, and which was put in force in the case of the Member for North-West Lanarkshire.

AGRARIAN CRIMES IN IRELAND.

MR. J. MORLEY: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question upon another subject. In another place certain figures have been stated as to the decrease in agrarian crimes. I wish to ask whether the Government will have laid upon the Table, before the further progress of the debate, details of that alleged decrease? The statement was that the number of offences had diminished from 1,100 to 660. It is very important that the House should have an analysis and classification of this Return. I ask, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman will give me a continuation of the Return granted last Session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the last Question, I have no difficulty in saying that if the Return referred to is only a continuation Return, I shall be happy to furnish it. I suppose the figures given in the other House were the ordinary Returns of agrarian outrages. I do not know that they can be laid on the Table out of their order, to meet the exigencies of debate, but I will see what can be done. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will ask me a Question on the subject another day, in answer to which I may be able to give the required information.

MR. J. MORLEY: I will ask a Question on Thursday.

IRELAND—THE DRAINAGE BILLS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask whether the Drainage Bills to be introduced this Session will be the same as those of last Session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it is usual at this stage of our proceedings to describe the character of Bills to be introduced.

IRELAND—THE KENMARE ESTATE—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps I may be permitted to correct and supplement something that dropped from me in my speech yesterday. In speaking of the county of Kerry I was interrupted by the hon. Member for Mayo, who asked what part of Kerry I was referring to. I am glad of the interruption, because I made a slight error which caused me to understate my case. Instead of speaking of the county of Kerry, I should have spoken of the Kenmare Estate. The facts are these: On the estate of the Earl of Kenmare in Kerry, there occurred from the 1st of August, 1888, to the 14th of October, 1888, but one case of outrage of any description, and this was a threatening notice. The agitation alluded to began at the end of September, and from the 14th of October, 1888, to the 15th of December, 1888, there occurred 11 outrages on this estate. Of these 11 outrages, one was a threatening letter, three were cases of killing or mutilating animals, two of cattle stealing, three of moonlighting, one injury to property, and one incendiary fire.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MR. PIGOTT.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I desire to ask the Home Secretary a Question about the disappearance of Mr. Pigott. I wish to ask him whether he or the authorities at Scotland Yard have taken any steps to secure the apprehension of that person? I further wish to ask him whether Pigott, or any other witnesses engaged for the *Times*, were under protection from Scotland Yard; if so, I desire to know how it was that Pigott was allowed to escape from this country?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have only just learned from the newspapers that the Court constituted last year has issued a warrant for the apprehension of Mr. Pigott. That warrant, no doubt, will be put in the hands of the police, and I have no doubt the police will use their utmost endeavours to execute it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is not an answer to my Question. I asked, in the first instance, was this gentleman or any other of the *Times* witnesses under surveillance by the London police; and, if so, whether any steps were taken, in the interests of what is called justice, to see that this man and persons of his kidney should be kept here to answer before the Commission any questions that may be put to them?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not aware that any witnesses subpœnaed by the *Times* newspaper were under the surveillance of the police. If the hon. Gentleman wishes any further information on the subject I will make inquiries;

but I am not aware of anything on the subject now.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether, in view of the importance of this witness Pigott, the Government have taken any steps to close the ports against him by telegraphing to the police authorities at those places?

[No answer.]

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask, as some of the witnesses have sworn that they were under protection, whether it would be the duty of the officers charged with that protection to make any report to the Home Secretary in the event of any of the persons they were protecting disappearing; and whether any such report has been made to the right hon. Gentleman in the case of Mr. Pigott?

MR. MATTHEWS: No report whatever has reached me with respect to Mr. Pigott. I understood the Question of the hon. Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) to refer not to protection, but to surveillance—watching. ["No, no!"] I certainly so understood him If the man in question was protected, I have no personal knowledge of it, and no report has been made to me of any witness requiring protection. Still, I do not deny that some witnesses may have been under protection.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer my Question—Has any attempt been made to capture Pigott? He is a very valuable person. I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman, as the representative of justice—British justice—in this House, whether he will be kind enough to state what attempt, if any, has been made to close the ports against Pigott?

MR. MATTHEWS: The knowledge that Mr. Pigott has disappeared reached me about an hour ago. In that interval I have personally taken no steps; but I can assure hon. Members that both the Government and the authorities of Scotland Yard will do their utmost to prevent Mr. Pigott escaping.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask, with reference to the officers charged with the protection of Mr. Pigott, whether the right hon. Gentleman will call on those officers for some special report as to the time and place when he disappeared?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not aware that any officer of the Metropolitan Police had Pigott under his protection.

MR. DILLON (Mayo. E): Perhaps the Chief Secretary can say whether any detectives from Ireland were charged with looking after him? I do think we are entitled to have from the Government some definite statement that they will not only endeavour to prevent Pigott's escape from London, but from Great Britain, and that they will exercise themselves at least to the same extent as they would do if they were trying to apprehend any one of us.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: All hon. Gentlemen must be aware that I have nothing to do with the management of the police in London. As far as I know, no protection was afforded Mr. Pigott. If any efforts of mine can conduce to the capture of that gentleman they certainly shall be made.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): May I ask the Home Secretary whether, now that the absconding of the *Times* witnesses has commenced, he will take precautions to prevent any other of the witnesses leaving the country, particularly Houston and a few others?

No answer was returned.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I want to ask the Chief Secretay whether he is aware that an Irish police sergeant in plain clothes was called to-day by the Attorney General to give an account of Mr. Pigott, having been residing at the same hotel with him, and I have also to ask under what instructions, and under whose orders, that sergeant of the police was there?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information on the point. I was not even aware that the incident to which the right hon. Gentleman alludes occurred in Court. If the right hon. Gentleman will put a Question on the paper I will make inquiries.

PRIVILEGE—STRANGERS IN THE LOBBY.

MR. SEXTON: I desire to say a word by way of personal explanation. I said yesterday I would to-day put a Question to you, Mr. Speaker, as to the admission of a person of the name of Houston to parts of the House reserved

to the use of Members of the House. Since then your Secretary, Sir, has been kind enough to inform me that the name of this person has not been placed this year on your Lobby List, or on any list of persons having special access to the House, and I therefore do not propose to put any Question.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not responsible to the hon. Member for whom I admit to the Lobby. Of course, I am glad to give any information in my power. Mr. Houston's name was on the Lobby List last Session for a specified period only. At the commencement of this Session no application was made on behalf of Mr. Houston, and his name was not placed on the List at all. I have not removed the name, as it was not there.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask if you will be good enough to say whether the period when Mr. Houston had admission to the Lobby synchronises with the passage of the Special Commission Act of 1888, when he had conversations with the First Lord of the Treasury?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I do not think that is a proper Question to put to me. I have endeavoured to admit to the Lobby representatives of different organizations and different parties in this House, and I am not aware that I have on any one occasion deviated from that course.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (QUEEN'S SPEECH, MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Queen's Speech, Motion for an Address, have precedence this day of the Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day, and To-morrow of the other Orders of the Day.—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MOTIONS.

—o—

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to amend "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Bernard Coleridge, and Mr. Fenwick.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 116.]

QUARRIES REGULATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill for the Regulation of Quarries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Childers, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Mr. Bryn Roberts, Mr. William Abraham, and Mr. Rathbone.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 117.]

FISHING IN RIVERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to amend and declare the Law relating to Fishing in Rivers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Arnold Morley, and Mr. Bernard Coleridge.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 118.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT (1875) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Francis Stevenson, Bill to amend "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Channing, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Picton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 119.]

DISPENSARY HOUSES (IRELAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Macartney, Bill to give further facilities for providing Dispensary Houses, &c., in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Macartney, Sir J. P. Corry, and Colonel Waring.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 120.]

CONTEMPT OF COURT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sexton, Bill to amend the Law relating to Contempt of Court, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Sexton, Mr. Asquith, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Bradlaugh.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 121.]

SOLICITORS' ANNUAL CERTIFICATE DUTY REPEAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Hea, Bill for the repeal of Solicitors' Annual Certificate Duty, ordered to be brought in by Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. M'Cartan, and Mr. O'Keeffe.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 122.]

ALDERMEN (COUNTY COUNCILS) ABOLITION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. James Rowlands, Bill to abolish the office of Alderman on Town and County Councils, ordered to be brought in by Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Picton, Mr. Halley Stewart, and Mr. Burt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 123.]

CATHEDRAL CHURCHES BILL.

On Motion of Sir Charles Dalrymple, Bill to provide for making Statutes respecting Deans and Chapters and Cathedral Churches in England; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Sir Charles Dalrymple, Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Stokes, Sir Matthew White Ridley, and Mr. MacInnes.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 124.]

BEER ADULTERATION PREVENTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Quilter, Bill for better securing the purity of Beer, ordered to be brought by Mr. Quilter, Sir Edward Birkbeck,

Baron Dimsdale, Mr. Heneage, Viscount Wolmer, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Herbert Gardner, Mr. Francis Stevenson, and Mr. Gurdon.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 125.]

STEAM BOILERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Provand, Bill to amend the Law relating to, and provide for the compulsory examination of Steam Boilers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Provand, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. William Abraham, and Mr. Howell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 126.]

METROPOLIS WATER (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Bill for enabling the County Council of London to introduce new supplies of Water into the Metropolis, and to acquire the rights of existing Water Companies, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 127.]

COUNTY COURT APPEALS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. M. Healy, Bill to amend the County Court (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Chance, and Mr. Joseph Kenny.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 128.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st February.]—[See page 41.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): Mr. Speaker, I looked forward with interest and anxiety to the attack that my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) intended to make against the Government. If the old adage is accurate that practice makes perfect, Her Majesty's Opposition ought, in the lapse of years, to arrive at considerable perfection in moving votes of want of confidence in Her Majesty's Government for their Irish Administration. We have had a series of these votes of want of confidence. We are just now considering one, and when I learned the Motion that my right hon. Friend was going to move, I wrote down on a piece of paper I now hold in my hand the points which I imagined my right hon. Friend would strive to make. I imagined that my right hon. Friend would have tried to show that the Crimes Act, which is directed against crime, has failed to accomplish its object, and that crime, instead of diminishing, was augmented. I should also have thought the right hon. Gentleman would show that the Crimes Act interfered unduly with the liberty of the subject, that the innocent suffered whereas the guilty went scot-free, and I anticipated that he would have gone on to show that liberty of speech was interfered with in Ireland. But, on the first head, that of "crime," my right hon. Friend hardly said anything at all, because he knew perfectly well that crime has undoubtedly diminished in Ireland, and that so far from crime, as was said last year, being driven under the surface and taking that form of agrarian crime which, unfortunately, we have seen in Ireland, there is less crime now than at any time since the commencement of the agitation. The first count my right hon. Friend has not attempted to establish, and therefore I suppose it falls to the ground. With regard to the innocent being punished, my right hon. Friend certainly brought forward some cases; but I do not think, if I may say so, that they were seriously meant. He cited some cases of certain persons who had laughed at the police, and who were put in gaol. The right hon. Gentleman himself, however, expressed a certain amount of doubt as to the accuracy of the allegation. Why, I think its utter absurdity is stamped on its very face. I have not heard of the circumstance before; but I venture to prophesy that when researches have been made into the accuracy or want of accuracy of that accusation it will be found, as probably my right hon. Friend believes himself in the bottom of his heart, that it is a wild effusion of the imagination of some Irish editor. With regard to freedom of speech, I venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that there is more freedom of speech in its proper sense in Ireland at the present moment than is to be found in any country in the world. On one occasion it was my good fortune to follow the hon. Member for the Scot-

land Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) during the recent electoral campaign at Maidstone, and the great point the hon. Gentleman made was that for a speech he might make with perfect impunity at Maidstone he would be imprisoned in Ireland. I said, "That undoubtedly is the case. It is perfectly true." But I also maintain it ought to be true. A homely illustration will exactly point my meaning. It is a well-known fact that some hon. Members are addicted to smoking. There is nothing to prevent them lighting a cigar in that portion of this building which is devoted to the worship of nicotine. It is a perfectly legal act, but there are conditions in England under which, if anyone lit a cigar, he would be instantly put in gaol. Let him go down into a coal mine and light a cigar, and he would find that what would be legal in the smoking-room of the House of Commons would, in an atmosphere filled with inflammable particles, be a criminal act of a heinous kind, because it would endanger the lives of those engaged in the mine. That may be a homely illustration, but it accurately represents the condition of free speech in Ireland. A speech may be treated with perfect impunity at Maidstone or in the House of Commons which in Ireland would mean the death of some unfortunate offender against the organization over which hon. Gentlemen opposite hold sway. The chief attack against the Government yesterday was their action in the case of Mr. Harrington. Is it unfair that Mr. Harrington should at the present time be undergoing punishment in Ireland? That is a matter of opinion; but, for my own part, I believe there is no man deserves it better. Mr. Harrington had ample opportunity of knowing the effect of language on the Irish people. In this House, and in his presence, not later than last year, I pointed out the result in a certain town in Kerry which he had mentioned by name; and in an article which he signed himself, so that there should be no mistake as to who wrote it, he held up to public execration land-grabbers, and he must have known that in that townland there was a land-grabber in danger of his life, whose name was Fitzmaurice. Within two months after that article was written Fitzmaurice was murdered in cold blood. I should have thought that his better feeling might have induced Mr. Harrington to refrain, in a neighbourhood which he knew was stained with innocent blood, from trying to foster and revive an organization which he knew was stained with outrage and crime. Let me give one other instance to show the effect of these speeches, which might be made with perfect impunity in the House of Commons, or in London, or elsewhere in England. In this country people might think them bloodthirsty speeches, but they would not lead to crime; but in Ireland they lead directly to, and are directly answerable for, most of the crime which has disgraced and sullied my native land. [*Home Rule cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes, it is my native land as much as yours, and there is no man in this House who feels the honour of being an Irishman more than I do. Let me mention another instance. There was a speech made in the adjoining county of Limerick on January 29, 1888—

> "I maintain that a land-grabber is a thief when he covets and steals his unfortunate neighbour's holding, and I want to say once more what I repeated on a hundred platforms—that the land-grabber incurred malediction in the days when the Holy Bible was written. 'Cursed be he who removes his neighbour's landmark' was the dictum of Holy Writ. He is a cowardly, slimy renegade, a man who should be looked upon as a social leper."

That speech was made by Mr. Davitt on January 29, 1888. Two days after that speech had rung round Kerry and Limerick Fitzmaurice was butchered in the light of day before his daughter's eyes. I want to know, is that the sort of freedom of speech which hon. Gentlemen opposite claim? I say that is a sort of freedom of speech which cannot be permitted to exist by, or coexist with, a civilized or ordered society. The right hon. Gentleman blames the Government very much for the arrest of Mr. M'Fadden and the way it was carried out, and the right hon. Gentleman said, "What would be said of me if I, when I had been Chief Secretary, had ordered the arrest of Dr. Kane when he left his church in Belfast on a Sunday?" But the instance which occurred in Mr. M'Fadden's case could not have occurred in the case of Dr. Kane, for Dr. Kane would have obeyed a summons to appear, and if a warrant had been issued for his arrest Dr. Kane would

have allowed the warrant to be served. If a warrant were issued for my own arrest I should not go and live lying about in the mountains of Donegal; I should submit myself to be tried; and my hon. Friend near me, who at one time was arrested, did not run away and hide. Mr. M'Fadden was flying from the hand of justice; a warrant was out from which he was trying to escape; and I maintain and believe, and I think I shall be supported in that belief by a consensus of the opinion of the country, that the blood of the man who was killed is at Mr. M'Fadden's door, just as if it was shed upon his doorstep. That is my opinion, and I believe it to be the opinion of the country. I now pass on. I do not intend to take up the time of the House with details, although I admit their importance, but I think the attack upon Her Majesty's Government is of a Petty Sessions character, rather than a great attack on a great principle of Imperial policy. I am very glad that that debate has occurred, because I believe it will place before the country the difference between the Parties. [*Cheers and counter cheers.*] I am glad that for once we are all satisfied. We are fighting at the present moment the greatest and the gravest battle that any civilized nation can fight. We are fighting on the one side for the triumph and the supremacy of the law of the land, and on the other for the triumph and the supremacy of the law of the League. I do not think hon. Gentlemen opposite will deny that. They have declared in public that they intend to set the law of the land at defiance, that they intend to set at defiance the Crimes Act, which is as much part of the law of the land as any other Statute on the Book, and declare that that Act is absolutely incapable to arrest their proceedings. If they succeed in proving that the law of the land cannot arrest their proceedings and call them to account when they break its provisions, then I say that their triumph is complete. There are to my mind two ways of dealing with law-breakers. You must put them down or you must give in to them. There is a third course, which is sometimes to put them down, and sometimes to give in to them. That is a course which has been followed by both Parties, but I think we have seen the unwisdom of that course; and when the right hon. Gentleman opposite says, "How can you hope that a coercive policy will now succeed in Ireland when in the past it has always failed," I answer that there is one great and marked distinction between a coercive policy for a fixed period and a permanent one—between the Crimes Act of the present Government and all those other Acts which were passed in bygone days. The present is a continuous Act. The reason the Crimes Act at present in force can be continuous is, that it does not in the very slightest degree interfere with law-abiding men, or with any liberty which any subject of Her Majesty the Queen should desire, whereas the Crimes Acts passed in former days by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian were of so severe and drastic a character, interfering as they did in an unlimited manner with the liberty of the subject, that they could not be allowed to remain on the Statute Book. It is because the present Act is continuous and does not hold out any hope that the policy of revolution will again triumph, that I believe that Coercion Act, which is really a reinforcing of the law of the land, will permanently remain on the Statute Book of the country, and help, as it is doing now, to establish in Irishmen that belief that the law of the land must be supreme which, I believe, will ultimately make the Irish people a law-abiding race. Of course, the Government have had much greater victories. It was prophesied on the front Opposition Bench that this Act was bound to fail. There are two kinds of prophets; one who lets his prophecy take its chance, and if it is fulfilled gets credit; and there is the other kind of prophet who fulfils his own prophecies or tries to do so. I might make a prophecy that some hon. Member would have a fall; but if I were surreptitiously and feloniously to produce that effect, and trip the hon. Member up, I should fulfil my own prophecy, but I should not deserve any credit. That is exactly what hon. and right hon. Gentlemen have been doing with Her Majesty's Government. They have been tripping up the law. The Irish are a pretty quick people to learn a lesson, and when they are told—especially on high authority—they are right in disobeying the law, they take that advice much more readily than they do

better advice. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, in speaking about law in Ireland—I think it was pretty strong language from an ex-Prime Minister—said—

"Gentlemen, what I wish to state to you is that the Irish cannot, and the Irish ought not to, acquiesce in a Government which is against them, and is a Government of unequal laws. I take first the law of combination among the poorer classes of the community by which they seek in the use of a weapon that nature has supplied to them."

The interpretation which any ordinary Irishman would put upon that is, that the "weapons" referred to were blackthorn sticks. I have been blamed for saying that under certain conditions I would disobey the law; but I have the authority of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone) for saying I am right in that. I should look upon a Home Rule Government in Dublin as a Government of unequal law; and, therefore, when I say I cannot and will not obey it I have the right hon. Gentleman on my side. A great effort is being made to defeat the law which this Parliament has passed, and to show that that law works unfairly. We remember that Mitchelstown occupied a very large portion of the speeches of Gentlemen opposite; but, somehow or other, Mitchelstown drooped. The right hon. Gentleman tried to revive it by the help of photographs; but even those failed. Then we had Mandeville. The right hon. Gentleman said at Birmingham we should hear a great deal more about Mr. Mandeville, but we have heard nothing since about Mandeville. Mandeville would not stand examination. He did very well on the platform, when Gentlemen opposite said the Chief Secretary had murdered Mr. Mandeville; but we know very well that statement will not stand the test in the House of Commons, and they never now bring Mandeville forward except incidentally.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): There was a direct Motion upon the case.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: We have heard nothing lately about Mandeville—nothing since the allusion of the right hon. Gentleman at Birmingham. Daniel O'Connell once said that when defending a man on a capital charge he produced the murdered man alive in Court, and yet the jury found his client guilty. And Gentlemen opposite know that they could and did produce Mandeville alive and well for a month after he had left prison—he himself boasted that he could tell the Coercionist Government they had not knocked a feather out of him. For some time Mr. Mandeville went about making speeches and took to staying up very late at night, and in the end he, unfortunately, died. That case will not wash, and the right hon. Gentleman, as far as I can remember, did not say much about it. But some cry had to be got up—some cry which would attract the British public, and the cry which is now being got up to attract the public—[*Cries of* "Pigott;" *cheers, and laughter from the Irish Benches.*] I do not know why hon. Members opposite cry that name at me. [*Laughter.*] I know nothing of the man at all, except that I believe he has thoroughly qualified himself to belong to the first Home Rule Parliament in Ireland. But, Sir, what is the great attraction that hon. Gentlemen opposite have had for the last month or two now? The clothes of Mr. O'Brien. [*Derisive cheers.*] Well, I am sorry to bring that matter forward, but I must. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, above and below the Gangway, have gone up and down the country drawing harrowing pictures of this naked patriot, and have tried to throw utter discredit upon Her Majesty's Government, and particularly upon the law which this House has passed, because they say it has led to these terrible scenes—Mr. O'Brien sitting bereft of those garments which most people like to wear in the day-time. If a great Party in the State like to make those garments of Mr. O'Brien their Oriflamme—the flag under which they are to march—and to use them for the purpose of sweeping Her Majesty's Government off the Treasury Bench, I think I am justified in confronting that Party in the House, and asking them to prove their case. I cannot help admiring the theatrical way in which hon. Gentlemen opposite timed those events to come off just before the meeting of Parliament, or the proceedings which the Lord Mayor of Dublin takes for the purpose of emphasizing the agitation. I know I am about to tread on dangerous ground, but I must even venture to incur the wrath of that civic functionary who sud-

denly, in the dead of the night—or rather in the early morning—woke to a consciousness that Mr. O'Brien was naked in his cell. Now, as a matter of fact, I do not believe Mr. O'Brien ever has been naked. I understand he has been without certain garments, but not entirely naked. So impressed was the Lord Mayor of Dublin with bringing the matter under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government that he determined on a very remarkable proceeding. The Lord Mayor of Dublin at 1 a.m. was a very different being from the Lord Mayor of Dublin at 1 p.m.; and at the witching hour the Lord Mayor of Dublin appeared to be under the impression that the Home Rule Bill had passed, and that he was master of the situation. He rang for his ambassador, who appeared on the scene in the person of the hall-porter, wrote a letter at that hour, and sent away the messenger to the Chief Secretary, bringing to his cognizance the fact that at that moment Mr. O'Brien was in a naked condition. It would have struck many that most people are usually without certain garments at that hour of the night. Of course I cannot answer for the habits of Nationalist Members. When the messenger came back he told the Lord Mayor that the Chief Secretary had opened the door, having come down in his shirt covered with orders. The hon. Member failed to discern that there was something rather imaginative in the description of his emissary. Well, I should have thought I might have appealed from the Lord Mayor of 2 a.m. to the Lord Mayor of 2 p.m. on Monday, but strange as it may seem the Lord Mayor of 2 p.m. appeared to be under the same delusion. After a day and a half's reflection the Lord Mayor went into the Phœnix Park and made a speech, and said he was informed that the Chief Secretary was a prominent figure in the affair; but whether it was the Chief Secretary or Mr. Hayes Fisher, the Member for Fulham, it was no excuse for not giving a reply to the letter. Gentlemen opposite deserve great credit for the ingenuity which they display in their theatrical performances. Can anybody conceive such a thing happening in London? Conceive the Lord Mayor of London sending a message to the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt), when he was Home Secretary, informing him that some malefactor had no clothes on at night, and then going into Hyde Park to make a speech, and saying that the right hon. Gentleman had come down in his night shirt covered with orders. Nobody could conceive such a thing happening in any other country but Ireland, and what I find fault with these Gentlemen for is this—I say they had no right to make such asses of themselves, and to bring down everlasting ridicule on the country to which we all belong. I have often heard hon. Gentlemen in this House talk of "Ditch-liners," but I do not agree with those who apply that name to us. We do not intend to line ditches; we will keep the ditches for hon. Gentlemen opposite when they get a chance to line them. But there was another speech made at that meeting which was of an interesting character. We all know the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy), and what an able speaker he is. We are all accustomed to his courtesy in this House; we know his ingenuity and research, but we have never regarded him before from a military point of view. Well, this is what the hon. Gentleman is reported to have said on that occasion: "Instead of speaking that day, he wished he could lead them as armed men to clean out the entire gang of lily-souled assassins." Whenever this takes place I hope I shall be there to see, for it would be a sight to see the corner boys from the height of the Phœnix at Dublin rushing down the valley of the Liffey to sweep away the British Empire. Well, Sir, who are these Gentlemen? And there is another point on which I should like to ask a question. Why are they in gaol? The only answer we can give to that question is, because they want to go to gaol. They go there of their own free will. If they obeyed the law, like ordinary persons in this country, they would not go to gaol; but, as it is, they go over to Ireland with the express and deliberate intent to break the law. I have here an authority for this which I think no one can deny—namely, that of the hon. Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor), as to whom I will venture to make this prophecy—and I believe he is going to gaol, for hon. Members opposite are always either coming from

been stated—I do not know with what truth—that the widow offered £8 for the house. Ten pounds were offered; that may not be accurate, but I am informed it is. There was a remedy then. It was to charge Elizabeth the same rent as was paid by Mary, that is Michael, on the Shirley estate. Now, the widow writes the following letter, sent to the *Times* by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone)—

"I was sorry to see false reports in the papers. I do not blame Mr. Gladstone"

The, I understand, is a relative of the right hon. Gentleman—

nor did I wish to remain in the place as I could not pay the rent."

Where were hon. Gentlemen opposite—the friends of the tenants? I remember a speech made by an hon. and learned Gentleman well known at the Bar—the hon. and learned Member for the Brigg Division of Lincoln. He described an eviction which took place, in a manner that would have made any man shed a tear who did not know his antecedents. He escorted an old woman from the house where the eviction took place, giving her his arm, and that old woman, I am informed, was imported for the occasion. Why did the hon. and learned Member not go to Flintshire and show his sympathy to this poor widow? Charity begins at home, and on this ground we have the right hon. Gentleman writing a letter to the *Times*, in which he says—

"Your wanton intrusion into the private domain was alien to the honourable traditions of the British Press, and has compelled me to be guilty of a seeming impertinence by troubling the people with my private affairs."

"Wanton intrusion," when he and his friends had been wandering all over every private domain in my native land! Now, Sir, I ask the right hon. Gentleman for a definite reply to this question: whether it would be right and just in me to go to Flintshire and to start an organization, which would have for its object the intimidation, the murder, the ruin of, or the outrage upon, any incoming tenant who took the widow's farm? That is the defence which is set up for the Land League and for boycotting. They have swallowed the whole thing. They have drunk the very dregs from which they averted their heads in former days. I believe that the policy of Her Majesty's Government, if pursued with unflinching courage, will ultimately triumph over the spasmodic efforts of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I do not believe in the solidarity of the two sides of the Gangway opposite. I believe that the English sense of justice and fair play, and manliness and courage, will rally round the Administration, regardless of torrents of the most infamous calumnies, and that the Government are determined to carry out the law without fear or favour or exception. I form my hope of success in Ireland on the fact that whatever faults they have, the Irish people are not absolutely fools. The Irish people know as well as I know the amazing benefits that this House has conferred upon them. No hon. Member opposite can deny that the Irish tenants have had benefits conferred upon them greater than any conferred upon any other tenants in the world. You have given them practically half the fee simple value, which they can sell in the open market and get far more for than the landlord can as a rule. They begin to realize this, and by-and-bye I believe you will find that Irishmen, who, as a rule, side with the stronger, will see that the law is able to maintain its own and to keep down those who oppose it. I can say, honestly and fearlessly, that there is no man among hon. Gentlemen opposite, or in the country, who more earnestly prays and desires the happiness and welfare of Ireland. They seek it in one way, I in another. I seek it by maintaining the law of Parliament and the authority of the Crown. I have been accused by hon. Gentlemen, in reference to a speech I made the other day, of not being a law-abiding man, and that, therefore, I had no right to condemn those whom I called lawbreakers. I maintain that that attack upon me has no foundation in fact. This Parliament may pass laws of which I entirely disapprove, but I would not raise my hand against them, but would seek to get them altered in the place whence they came. But a law passed by an Irish Parliament is a different thing. I have never consented to obey such an authority as that. Allow me to illustrate what I mean. What course would hon. Gentlemen opposite pursue if the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for Derby, say, experiencing one of those sudden conversions which take place in some statesmen, were suddenly to propose—as he might propose some day—the establishment of a Parliament in Ireland, the first qualification for Membership of which was that the Member must belong to the Orange organizations. [Mr. T. HEALY: We would be very glad of it; we would be delighted with it.] If we were to judge their estimate of such a Parliament by their speeches outside of this House, I should say that would be the very last thing to cross their mind. [Mr. T. HEALY: We would take it to-morrow morning.] I venture to say that if such a monstrous proposition were carried, there is no method, even force, which would not be legitimate to be used by hon. Gentlemen opposite in disregard of such an authority. You have always pleaded against ascendancy, but you propose an ascendancy to endure for ever, an ascendancy in which we, the Party to which I belong, would not in any sense be represented. Sir, we will never acknowledge or be subject to such an authority. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members laugh; they are are at liberty to do so, but they must admit that there are many in Ireland who share my views. The hon. Member for Cork, I admit, speaks in this House in the name of many Irishmen, but so do I. The House must remember there are two Irelands. ["No, no!"] A very high authority has said so. Listen to this quotation—

> "You must never forget there are two Irelands, the Ireland of men of all parties, creeds, ranks, and callings, who, in whatever else they may differ, unite in the wish to preserve law and order, and the right of every citizen to go about his business in peace and safety, and that other and smaller Ireland of men who foment, condone, and sympathize with crime."

These are the words of a right hon. Gentleman who was Chief Secretary for Ireland at the time he uttered them, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan). With all the information then at his disposal, including that of Major Le Caron, he formed that opinion and made that speech. That is what the right hon. Gentleman was, and that is what he is. Sir, I repeat what I said in Ireland. Whatever solution may come, to one solution at any rate we shall never agree. If it is to be a rebel to refuse to obey rebel authority, then I am a rebel. If it is to be a law-breaker to refuse to obey the authority of those who have brought law into contempt, and as far as they could have trampled upon it, then I am a law-breaker. But, Sir, I maintain that Her Majesty the Queen has no more devotedly loyal subjects in the world than in my native country. To Her we owe allegiance, to this Parliament we owe allegiance and obedience, but never to another. Whatever hon. Gentlemen opposite may say, we should be unworthy of the blood that flows in our veins, of the race to which we belong, of our fathers who before us refused to bear the yoke you would now tie about our necks, if we, their sons, did not proclaim the fact that we never, never shall obey such decrees.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): It is customary for the hon. and gallant Gentleman to give these performances once or twice during the Session for the amusement of the House; but his performance on this occasion, to judge from the demeanour of those around him, was rather less amusing than usual. I think the sense of every quarter of the House will be with me, and I know the sense of the people will agree with me, when I say that such speeches may be very amusing, but certainly they are not politic or statesmanlike. If a good and strong illustration were needed why it is that the people of Ireland are always in a state of discontent and revolt against the Executive, I need go no farther than such a speech as we have just heard from a fair sample of the gang of men under whose guidance the mass of the people of Ireland are ruled against their will. An hon. and gallant Gentleman who thinks it highly creditable to himself, amid the cheers of his four followers, to declare that the ditches of Ireland shall be preserved to pitch us into whenever they can get the opportunity! I hope the day is near at hand, and will not be long delayed, when the people—I speak not for myself—will not be in the power of such men to be pitched into ditches or trampled upon. I have not the slightest intention, and I do not think the House will expect me to do so, to follow the hon. and gallant Gentleman through his long array of stale jokes, utterly beside the issue before us. There are

only two points in the whole of that long and rambling oration in the least degree worthy of comment. The hon. and gallant Gentleman deemed it consistent with fair play and manliness to commence his discourse with a virulent and calumnious attack on a Member of the House now undergoing six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Why did he not select as the object of his attack a man on these benches who could answer him? My hon. Friend could very well deal with the hon. and gallant Gentleman were he at liberty, but under the detestable system that prevails in Ireland he will not even hear the charges made against him. That does not accord with my idea of what is fair or manly.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: I made the same accusation in the hon. Member's presence last year.

An hon. MEMBER: It is not true.

MR. DILLON: Whether it was made last year or not, it should not have been made in the hon. Member's absence this year. With reference to the contemptible attack made on the right hon. Gentleman, whom I shall certainly not undertake to defend or speak for, I will only say the hon. and gallant Gentleman has not improved whatever position he had by these attempted sneers. Let the hon. and gallant Gentleman advance in force upon Flintshire and attempt to address a Flintshire audience, and I can tell him he will require strong protection to secure him from intimate acquaintance with the nearest horse-pond. The answer to all the silly talk of the hon. and gallant Gentleman is that the thing could not be done; there is no grievance to encourage organization among the tenants. There is this difference between such a case and our action in Ireland; we do not go down and force our system on the country; we are implored to go to the assistance of unfortunate oppressed people, and when we do go the entire population turns out to listen to us and carry out the policy we recommend. We have heard the statements of the Chief Secretary as to the improvement in the condition of Ireland, and these statements remind me forcibly of certain statements to be found in that most interesting volume, the "Life of the late Mr. W. E. Forster." In the winter of 1882 Mr. Forster wrote—it is touching and painful now to read the letters—to his intimate friends, saying—

> "My Resident Magistrates gave me the best reports, crime is declining and rents are being paid, and the people are being turned away from the Nationalist Leaders. We shall soon have the whole country on our side."

We know how in a very short time every one of these expectations was falsified. Just as in these days we are scorned and laughed at, so we were ridiculed and disbelieved then. The late Mr. Forster thought he had got hold of a patriot who had more influence and knowledge among the Irish people than we had. At the very time he was writing these letters he was in correspondence with the illustrious Richard Pigott, who undertook for a trifling consideration to convert the National Party of Ireland from the hon. Member for Cork to the Government of the day. I have not the slightest doubt that the present Chief Secretary has similar agents willing to enlighten the people and bring them over to the Government. The system that has existed for so long in Ireland breeds Pigotts as corruption breeds worms. There never has yet been a Government in Ireland that has not had communications with people of that class. But I content myself now with alluding to the decrease in crime. There is a decrease of crime in Ireland, and no person rejoices at it more than I do. The whole argument of many Members of the Party opposite is addressed to the supposition that we are working in Ireland for the increase of crime. I deny that, and always shall. It is part and parcel of that detestable system of calumny and insult now being exploded and blown into atoms. Our interest is as great as yours, and, indeed, much greater, in the decrease of crime. The reasons with which I account for the decrease in crime are chiefly two; the first is the numerous concessions and settlements which have been obtained by tenants hopelessly in arrear in certain districts by the working of the Plan of Campaign; the second and stronger reason is, that while in the winter of 1882 the people were driven to desperation by the knowledge that there was no feeling of sympathy for them in this House, they are now buoyed up with the hope engendered by the sympathy displayed for

them in this country. In my judgment the speeches made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and by his friends, have had more effect in stopping agrarian crime in Ireland than all the Coercion Acts ever passed. It is impossible to escape from this conclusion, because in the course of Irish history you have tried coercion 70 or 80 times in every shape ingenuity can devise, and we have been taught by long and terrible experience that coercion will not put down agrarian crime, but, on the contrary, that agrarian crime follows in spite of any coercion you may devise. But what is the difference between the condition of things in Ireland now, and what it has been under former Coercion Acts? Hon. Members opposite would have us believe that we have a Heaven-sent Minister, and that is the distinction between Ireland now and formerly, when coercion was administered under less able men. I take a totally different view. I do not see the wonderful ability in the administration of the present Chief Secretary. I recognize considerable literary capacity—and a great gift of conveying insulting sarcasms in controversy. It is preposterous to say that the present Chief Secretary exceeds in ability all his Predecessors who have had to administer Coercion. The distinction that marks off the present period by a broad and manifest line from any previous period in Coercion history is, that for the first time a great Minister has come forward at the head of a great Party and bid the people be of good heart; has told them to control themselves and suffer with patience, for the time is approaching and near at hand when a termination shall be put to their sufferings. That alone it is that has made it possible to show a diminution of crime under a Coercion Act. Now, a few words on the question of prison treatment. First, let me say that we have from the very outset been grossly misrepresented in the whole business. It has been said that we claim that the man dressed in black should receive different treatment from that afforded the poor man in frieze. That is a pure invention emanating from the speeches of the Chief Secretary. Myself, Mr. O'Brien, and numbers of other leaders in the movement, have taken every opportunity to declare our repudiation of the idea that we claim the slightest difference in food or treatment from the poorest man who is punished for acting on our counsel. That has been our attitude from the outset. We never ask for better food or any mitigation of the rules inflicting physical discomfort, and that I may say is severe. It would be more decent and manly for hon. Members to try the effect of the plank bed before they greet the mention of it with a laugh. What we asked and what we shall get in the end in spite of jeers and insults—and I believe the people of England are entirely on our side in this—what we ask is that a man who for political motives in Ireland does certain things that brings him under these so-called legal tribunals should not be subjected to those particular parts of prison discipline which are simply matters of personal insult and indignity, and, I repeat for the twentieth time, our demand is made on behalf of the poorest labouring man as strongly as in favour of Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Carew, or any other Member. In the first place we object to association with criminals; secondly, we object to the revolting service that is put upon criminals; and, thirdly, we have objected and do object to wearing the livery of crime. It has been used as a taunt against us that in objecting to wear prison clothes we are doing a very absurd thing. Do Members know what prison clothes are? Have they seen a prisoner in the prison dress? Are they aware that Conservative newspapers in Ireland boasted that when the Act was passed they would soon have us clad in the livery of crime? These words were used before we had appeared before your tribunals to be condemned; the intention was to humiliate us by putting on the dress worn by forgers and others guilty of disgraceful crimes. I say this attempt to humiliate us I will prove and bring home to the responsibility of the Chief Secretary. [An hon. MEMBER: Where is he?] It is part of that infamous conspiracy that has been carried on in this country by Pigotts, a department of which has come to be known as Pigottism. Let me, before I go into details of the attack upon Mr. O'Brien, draw the attention of the House for a moment to an observation made by the Chief Secretary yesterday. He said—

"Admitting, for the sake of argument, that men have a political object in view, if you therefore treat them as political prisoners you must admit dynamitards and assassins, and until you are prepared to carry out your principle to a logical conclusion, and say that a man who attempts to blow up this House, or kill a Chief Secretary or other official, should enjoy a relaxation of prison rules, your political offender argument absolutely falls to the ground."

This is one of the most extraordinary doctrines I ever heard. It is a departure from the universal practice among civilized nations; it is the adoption by his nephew of the doctrine laid down by Lord Salisbury when he said that political prisoners were to be treated as others, in proportion to the formidable nature of the movement in which they were engaged. No doubt the Chief Secretary would have treated George Washington with all these indignities if he had him in his power—would have knocked him down, stripped him, and cut his hair. So the doctrine of the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary is that there should be no distinction between forgers and political offenders—they should be submitted to the same punishment and degradation. The question was raised here to-night whether it was reasonable or not for us to object to associate with forgers, pickpockets, thieves, and other low criminals, and an hon. Member opposite said it was not. It is possible, in view of recent developments, that certain Members of the Tory Party do not object to associate with forgers, but allow me to say we have not reached that pitch of civilization in Ireland yet. We are backward and Arcadian in our innocence, and we do object to associate with forgers or with respectable Liberal Unionists of Belfast, who poison people to get the amount of insurance. We feel it a degradation and insult to be clothed in the prison garb, and to tramp round a prison yard, with perhaps a poisoner in front and Richard Pigott behind. This is our objection—not to the physical suffering of the punishment. We object to the moral degradation to which the Minister who controls Ireland would subject his political enemies. I make the charge with all deliberation. I am perfectly aware it is an exceedingly grave and serious charge. I charge the Chief Secretary with deliberately, on his own responsibility, gratifying his personal enmity against Mr. O'Brien, in a way that seems to me inconceivably mean. He stated in this House previously that on the occasion of the former imprisonment he had studied closely the Reports which reached the Castle as to Mr. O'Brien's health. He was not content with the local Reports, but he sent a physician from England, who also reported. He had the Reports of Dr. M'Cabe, the doctor of the Prisons Board, and of the famous, or infamous, Dr. Barr, and of the local doctor, to the effect that it would be dangerous to subject Mr. O'Brien to the ordinary prison treatment, or to violence of any kind. What happens? Mr. O'Brien, in this House and at Cork, had surely inflicted considerable annoyance on the Chief Secretary.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Never.

MR. DILLON: The general sentiment of this House, as far as I can judge, is, that in the encounter which took place some time ago, Mr. O'Brien had considerably the better of it. This, then, is what I wish to put to the House: If any hon. Member of this House had been engaged in controversy with another with whom he had had severe passages of arms, and if afterwards he got his opponent into his power, he would take every precaution to prevent the possibility of anyone saying that he had taken a mean and contemptible vengeance. But the case is greatly strengthened when the right hon. Gentleman has these Medical Reports, under which he is bound not to inflict these indignities upon Mr. O'Brien. The right hon. Gentleman, however, held his hand, knowing that some time ago he sent out a circular warning and intimidating the governors of prisons in Ireland, if they did not enforce the letter of the law in every one of the prison rules against Members of Parliament who might come into their hands.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

MR. DILLON: It came from the right hon. Gentleman's Department, which he does not control except when he likes, very well knowing that he lets Mr. O'Brien go to a gaol where a special garrison had been placed to meet him—a garrison of men selected because they were known to be hostile and enemies. We heard the other day of the philanthropy of the doctor of Clonmel. I believe, from information I have received, that the doctor in Clonmel acted a low and,

I was going to say, a villanous part, because he was heard to say—"Shortly after he comes in here you will see that he will be stripped before he will have time to talk." I have proved that the right hon. Gentleman could, with the greatest ease, have prevented Mr. O'Brien from being assaulted. But scarcely was he locked up in gaol than he was attacked most violently, knocked down, brutally ill-treated in a way that no ordinary prisoner should be dealt with, and stripped naked. To show how indecent was the hurry, I might mention that when I was myself sent to Dundalk Gaol no question was raised as to the clothes I was to wear until the next morning—but they were decent men there—when an official came in and said—"Mr. Dillon, I am afraid I must ask you to wear these clothes." Now let me direct your attention to the action of the right hon. Gentleman. The Chief Secretary, having been made aware of the facts of Mr. O'Brien's case, went to a banquet in Dublin and never once alluded to the circumstance that Mr. O'Brien's treatment was accompanied by violence and insults, although for the first time yesterday he referred to the amount of violence which "unhappily" had to be used. He never said a word about "unhappily" in Ireland. Whenever he referred to the matter it was with words accompanied by insolent sneers and laughter.

MR. BALFOUR: I have constantly used the word before.

MR. DILLON: But you did not at the banquet, for here is the official report. I want to show that the language the right hon. Gentleman used was brutally wanton and insulting to Mr. O'Brien; and, furthermore, that it was absolutely and entirely false. He takes out a telegram sent by the Lord Mayor, and says—

"I have this document about Mr. O'Brien's treatment. In this document I find 'Illegal and brutal violence [Laughter]—that is not it—[Laughter], 'unexampled indignation' [Laughter], 'system of attacking and breaking down your political adversary by torture.' [Laughter.] No; that is not it; here it is—'Mr. O'Brien has now been naked in his cell for thirty-six hours.' [Roars of laughter.]"

Recollect these roars of laughter are contained in the report sent out by the official shorthand writer, the Chief Secretary having refused to allow Nationalist reporters to attend the banquet. This is the official description of what took place—

"When he got to Clonmel Prison he refused to allow—he threw every obstacle in the way of—any medical examination; he declined absolutely to be weighed [Laughter], and as he did not permit the doctor to form any judgment from personal examination of his case, he went through the ordinary process to which every prisoner is subject who offends against the laws."

The right hon. Gentleman states that because Mr. O'Brien would not allow the doctor to examine him he was subjected to this violence. Now, every precaution was taken—and successfully taken—for a whole week to prevent Mr. O'Brien reading that statement. Can human meanness go further than that? But we broke the blockade at last, although illegal measures were even taken to keep the information away from Mr. O'Brien, who was refused permission to see his counsel. I have been able to obtain from Mr. O'Brien, in his own words—which are entitled to credence in this House just as much as if he were present—a description of what took place, and I will read it—

"About 11 a.m. on the morning after my arrival in the prison, the chief warder, Gough, entered my cell and said, 'Come to the doctor.' I followed him to the wide, open court, stone-paved. A gentleman was standing at a high desk in this open corridor. He did not salute me, nor in any manner inform me who he was. His first words were, 'Open your vest.' I was obliged to ask him, 'Are you the prison doctor?' He said, 'Yes,' and drew out his stethoscope. I opened my vest, and he placed the stethoscope to my chest on the right and left side, as well as I can remember, without asking to have my shirt opened. He next said, 'Have you a cough?' I said, 'I should be very sorry to be personally discourteous, but owing to the past perversion on a former occasion of my communications with the prison doctor in Tullamore I have no means of protecting myself against misrepresentation, unless to decline to make any communication as to my health, but you are at perfect liberty to examine me in every way you choose.' He said, 'That does not matter; open your shirt; your shirt is too stiff.' I then opened my shirt, and he examined me with another instrument, I believe a binaural stethoscope—after which he said, 'Put out your tongue.' I did so. He then struck me lightly on the stomach, and without another word put up his instrument. I had to ask him, 'Is that all?' He said 'Yes,' and I turned back to the cell with the chief warder, who had been a witness of the examination, and who, like the doctor and myself, was standing in the corridor during the examination."

Now compare that statement with the one made to this laughing banquet,

that the attack made on Mr. O'Brien was in consequence of his refusal to allow a medical examination. It is as absolutely false a statement as could be made. Mr. O'Brien's description continues—

"About five minutes afterwards the chief warder returned to my cell and said, 'We must force you to put on the prison clothes. I asked to see the governor, who appeared to have been waiting outside the door, for he immediately appeared. I said, 'I have to ask that a doctor shall be present during any attack upon me.' He said, 'I cannot do that; you have passed the doctor.' Then,' said I, 'you will have to strip me by force,' or words to that effect. I placed my back to the further wall of the cell. Three warders immediately rushed at me with the chief warder. The four seized me, and a violent struggle took place between us, the governor standing by."

What a noble revenge!—

"They succeeded after a struggle in flinging me on my back on the floor, dragging my clothes away meanwhile. When I was down one man placed his knee on my chest, not, as I believe, brutally, but with a pressure that caused me considerable suffering. I heard someone, I think the chief warder, say, 'Don't hurt him.' The pressure was then relaxed, and I struggled to my feet again, and renewed the struggle while my clothes were being torn off one by one. I was then flung down a second time on the floor, this time on my face. I continued to struggle with all my force while they were dragging the prison clothes on me, and from the struggle and exhaustion I became so faint that they had twice to cease in order to give me a drink of water. During this second struggle my strength was totally exhausted. I heard the governor give the order to have my hair and beard taken off, and I remember the first few dashes made at me with the scissors. After that I lost consciousness, and when I recovered found my mouth full of hairs, and was propped up on a stool between two warders, who still held my arms. The governor said, 'Surely you have resisted enough now; you know it has to be done.' I said to him, 'You know little of me if you do not know that the struggle is only beginning now. The instant my hands are free I will fling these clothes off again.' While we were speaking, Alderman Hackett, one of the visiting justices, whom I did not know at the time, came into the cell. I was still gasping for breath, sitting on the stool between the warders. I told him, as well as I was able in my condition at the time, what had happened. He was greatly shocked, but it was not at my suggestion he went for a clergyman. The warders having followed Alderman Hackett to the door, I instantly threw off the prison clothes. Three of them rushed at me again, and another struggle took place. They succeeded in forcing on some of the prison clothes again, seizing and twisting my arms all the time. In consequence of my resistance the chief warder told them not to mind forcing on the coat or vest this time. I again became so faint that they again put water on my lips, but continued to hold my arms while I stood leaning against the wall for a considerable period. So far as I can estimate the scene had by this time lasted half an hour. The warders continued to hold me for a long time, when the chief warder said, 'Bring him along,' and I was immediately dragged to the door in my shirt-sleeves and with my feet naked. No intimation whatever was given me that I was being brought to be weighed. Up to this moment the question of weighing had never been mentioned to me either by the doctor or the warders, and I should never have made the slightest objection if I had known that that was their object. I was dragged across a large open space, which I have since learnt was the main hall of the prison. At the moment I was so stupefied, and my bad sight made me so helpless (my spectacles having been taken from me during the struggle and not returned), that I had only the most confused notion of where I was being taken; my impression was that I was being dragged to a punishment cell. I said to the warders who had hold of my arms again and again, 'Where are you dragging me to?' They made no reply, but pulled me on to what I now believe was a weighing machine, beside which the governor and the doctor were standing. My legs and arms were dragged about the machine in an exceedingly painful way, and I then said, 'As long as you are treating me in this barbarous fashion I will submit to nothing except by force.' The governor said, 'Take him away.' They apparently gave up the attempt to weigh me."

Let the House compare this statement of Mr. O'Brien's with that which was made at the banquet by the right hon. Gentleman, not one word of which is true.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am very unwilling to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, and have refrained hitherto from doing so. I may say, with regard to the information I made public at the banquet, that it was founded entirley on a report in the *Freeman's Journal*. I had no official report at that time.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman said at the banquet that the Prisons Board was not in his Department. Questions connected with prisons did not come through his hands, and therefore it was only from accidental circumstances that he became acquainted with the case. The right hon. Gentleman said that he went down to the office on the Friday, when the facts which he had just stated were brought before him.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is exactly what I indicated. When I went to the office the Under Secretary brought me a copy of the *Freeman's Journal* of that day.

MR. DILLON: I leave it to any Member of this House whether any

individual reading that speech would not have taken it to be a statement of the knowledge of the Chief Secretary founded on official documents. The right hon. Gentleman said he went down to the office when the "following facts" were brought before him. The words are no quotation from the *Freeman's Journal*, and the Chief Secretary adopted the statements, whatever they were, and said that he immediately proceeded to write a minute to the effect that, though the responsibility for Mr. O'Brien's conduct in refusing to submit to medical examination would rest with himself, the Chief Secretary did not think he ought to permit Mr. O'Brien to ruin his constitution for the purpose of injuring Her Majesty's Government. There was not a person in that room who did not believe, and was not justified in believing, that the facts mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman were taken from an Official Report at his disposal. My attention has also been drawn to another point which strengthens my case. The right hon. Gentleman read first of all a telegram from the *Freeman's Journal*, and after reading it alluded to it in the following terms:—"That, gentlemen, is the important part of the telegram which you have all seen in the *Freeman's Journal*." Now I want the House to understand that the right hon. Gentleman, who stated that this telegram was wholly and absolutely incorrect, gives an account on his own authority of what actually happened.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no desire to interrupt the hon. Gentleman. This particular fact is sprung upon the House. If the House will permit me, as far as I recollect, I will give the exact narrative. If I recollect rightly—I know I am taking a liberty with the hon. Gentleman—the events referred to occurred on the Thursday. On the Friday I was at the office. I had not seen the morning papers. According to my recollection, the Under Secretary came into my room and pointed out the story given in the *Freeman's Journal*. I did not accept that report as true; but I did think that the part of it which referred to Mr. O'Brien's refusal to be examined was probably true.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): When and where was it stated in the *Freeman's Journal*?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I may be wrong, but I believe, if my recollection serves me right, the hon. Gentleman will find it in the *Freeman's Journal*. I have not refreshed my memory. I had reason to believe on the Friday that the sole reason for the report in the *Freeman's Journal* was that the medical examination had not been allowed to take place, and then I forwarded, by special messenger, the medical reports made about Mr. O'Brien on the previous occasion. On Saturday I made my speech. I think I must have received some kind of official notification of what did take place in the prison, or I should not have said at the banquet that these Reports were false. I do not think my Official Reports referred to Mr. O'Brien's refusal or non-refusal to be examined. I still believed the statement of the *Freeman's Journal*, when it might naturally be believed that Mr. O'Brien had refused to be examined. The matter was brought before Mr. O'Brien, and he took means of making his complaints public. I took the opportunity of correcting my mistake in the Press.

MR. DILLON: A very strange and wonderful story. I leave that explanation to speak for itself. Before I pass from this particular branch of the subject, I want to direct attention to what the Chief Secretary did and said. He said, "I do not think Mr. O'Brien should be permitted to ruin his constitution in order to injure Her Majesty's Government." He shows not the slightest symptom of a feeling of humanity; his one object of care is Her Majesty's Government. What did he do? He says, "I therefore gave directions that as Mr. O'Brien would not allow himself to be medically examined, the reports made by Dr. Ridley and Dr. Barr should be sent down by special messenger to the doctor at Clonmel, so that he might carefully watch Mr. O'Brien and take care that no eccentricity on his part should injure his constitution." But why were not these reports of the previous occasion of Mr. O'Brien's imprisonment sent down before this brutal assault of the Governor was committed? Why was not a telegram sent from the Castle? Perhaps it was in order that this brutal and disgusting assault on Mr. O'Brien might give the right hon. Gentleman the pleasure of sneering at him at the banquet. Then, finding that a large section

of his constituents at Manchester did not approve his conduct, the right hon. Gentleman wrote a long letter to a certain Mr. Armitage, in which he said that Mr. O'Brien's offence was of a very different character from that which it was represented to be by the right hon. Member for Newcastle. In the whole history of political controversy I know of nothing meaner than this attempt to fasten odious charges on an opponent. The right hon. Gentleman proceeds in the letter to give what in his judgment was a fair specimen of the speech for which Mr. O'Brien was convicted. He says—

"Take, for instance, these sentences:—'I am afraid land-grabbers are living and thriving in the midst of you. . . . If all our labours for the last ten years have not been in vain, you ought to know how to deal with a land-grabber.' I say without fear of contradiction that a Government which should allow words like these to be uttered, with whatever intention on the part of the speaker, in a district in Ireland where there were evicted farms, might be making itself accessory to assassination."

Now let the House just listen for a second to what the real speech of Mr. O'Brien was. He did say—

"I am afraid they (land-grabbers) are living and thriving in the midst of you, and you know it. I need not go into particulars. If all our labours for the past ten years have not been in vain, you ought to know a land-grabber when you meet him; you ought to know how to deal with him without any instructions from me."

But then my hon. Friend gave the instructions which were suppressed by the right hon. Gentleman. I will, however, read them to you—

"If you want a lesson how to deal with land-grabbers, go to the English trade unions, and ask them how they deal with cowards and sneaks."

My hon. Friend went on to say—

"I just thought of a higher authority than Lord Salisbury upon the question of land-grabbing, and the words came back to my mind—the mighty words of Scripture—'Break not the bounds of the widow, and enter not into the field of the fatherless, for the Lord hath raised them up a kinsman whose arm is mighty, and he will avenge.' (Cheers.) The Lord has raised up for the homeless and defenceless Irish peasant; the Lord has raised up a friend whose arm is mighty. And I tell you that no law can deal with that power, because it is itself a law of nature. It is the first principle of self-preservation. For hundreds of thousands of the people of Ireland, no alternative, absolutely no alternative, for many of the homeless poor of Ireland, except the alternative of the blunderbuss. It is because I abhor and condemn crime in every form that I hope that every man and every woman in Tipperary will to-day enrol themselves as Primrose knights and Primrose dames, and take a leaf out of the Primrose book."

Sir, I say that a man is no man if he throws out unjust charges against an adversary who is unable to meet him, and denies him the right even of reading the charges levelled against him, but accuses him, upon garbled extracts, of inciting to assassination. Yet this is the kind of thing to which we are subjected in Ireland. That is the kind of war which is being carried out against the Nationalists, and I say that it is a method which will be known to all posterity as "Pigottism." Talk of calumny, and of insult, and of false accusations and slanders! I challenge the annals of political warfare to show anything like what has been levelled at our heads.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member has brought against me the accusation, couched in violent language, that I accused Mr. O'Brien of inciting to murder. Now, I guarded myself against attributing any motives to Mr. O'Brien in the matter. My words were these—

"I say, without fear of contradiction, that a Government which should allow words like these to be uttered, with whatever intention on the part of the speaker, in a district in Ireland where there were evicted farms, might be making itself accessory to assassination."

The House will notice that I distinctly laid down that words like these might produce a collision. I adhere still to what I said; but I did not suggest that Mr. O'Brien had that intention, or any other intention, and I carefully guarded myself against it.

MR. DILLON: I want to know whether the right hon. Gentleman considers it consistent with his ideas of proper political conduct to have suppressed passages which would fully have explained what the action of Mr. O'Brien really was? I read all that he said, but I say that his purpose was to convey to the people of Manchester that Mr. O'Brien had incited to assassination. That is the only plain meaning that can be put upon his language. If not, why were these passages suppressed, and why was Mr. O'Brien punished? The words, taken by themselves, did not amount to the

meaning sought to be put upon them; they were innocent words, and no man ought to be punished for using them. I am not at all surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have concluded his speech at the Dublin banquet by remarking that these little excitements were soon forgotten, but that the powers of mendacity were by no means exhausted. When the right hon. Gentleman was driven into a corner upon the subject of prison treatment, he said that all Irish prisoners were treated in the same manner; that he could not give dispensations, but that the law required that all prisoners convicted of offences should be treated in the same way. Now, I say that that also is false. It is not true that all political prisoners are treated in the same way. I need only refer to the cases of the Belfast swindlers, and Mr. White, J.P., who was charged with cruelty to a child, to show that, while political prisoners are treated with relentless severity, offences committed by friends of the Government are treated with the greatest leniency. The Belfast swindlers were guilty of a disgusting crime; but the redeeming feature in their case was that one of them was the Secretary of the Association which got up the demonstration for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain). He was a man—for I saw him on his trial—of a sanctimonious cast of countenance, and the evidence proved that he never appeared out of doors without a silk hat. The Crown exhausted every contrivance to protect the Belfast prisoners, and although the evidence was overwhelming, no pressure was used for a severe judgment. Consequently, these men, who were convicted of one of the most abominable crimes known in civilized life—namely, the insuring of a number of lives, forging certificates, and then supplying men with whiskey who were known to be in the habit of taking too much in order to kill them — men convicted of this atrocious crime were sentenced simply to six months' imprisonment. That is the kind of law and order that exists in Ireland. The prisoners were brought to Belfast Gaol and then ordered to be removed to Derry Gaol. When they emerged from Belfast Gaol to be removed to Derry they were dressed in their own clothes, and one of them, who is said to be the possessor of a fortune of £50,000, but was desirous of adding to it by nefarious practices, said he was cold, upon which the governor of the gaol said he would lend him his own overcoat. I do not state that as a positive fact, but such is my information. At Derry Gaol Mr. Alderman Bell, one of the visiting justices, visited the prisoners Dunlop and Matthews, and he reports that he found Dunlop reading and Matthews writing, and both were entirely satisfied with everything. The only thing they said they wanted was their liberty. Probably if they will send a petition to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham he will procure even that for them. Contrast this treatment with that of a Member of this House, whose only crime is that he has shown the spirit of a man, and has refused to desert his people in obedience to the dictates of the Lord Lieutenant. Mrs. Harrington writes to say, in reference to the treatment of her husband, that he was put to stone-breaking and chopping wood; that the skin was off his fingers with oakum-picking, and that he was driven in prison clothes from Tralee upon an outside car through the chief town of the constituency which he represents in this House, with no overcoat, and only an old blanket to use as a rug to cover him. She spoke to him for a moment and saw that his fingers were raw. See the contrast between the treatment of Mr. Harrington and that of the Belfast swindlers! But let me give another contrast. In December last, Mr. O'Shea, the Secretary of a local branch of the National League at Macroom, was accused of writing a threatening letter, and was sentenced to four months' imprisonment with hard labour. The charge against him was intimidation, and he was convicted, although the man to whom the letter was written came forward and swore that he was in no way intimidated. Here is a contrast. At Stapletown on the 1st of October, 1888, a member of the firm of Hussey & Co., well-known land agents, was charged with assaulting a common prostitute. The police were attracted by her screams, and arrested her assailant, whom they found lying in the hall exhausted. Mr. Gardner, R.M., convicted the offender, but thought the ends of justice would be satisfied by imposing a fine of £5. To make the

picture complete, Mr. Gardner is the magistrate who passed a severe sentence upon the Kerry prisoners, against whom no offence whatever was proved. Is it wonderful, under such circumstances, that the people of Ireland should not respect the law? If I were to take the trouble to inquire, I could give numerous instances, but I will content myself with one, that of Adam White, J.P., of the County Leitrim, who is a member of the Loyal and Patriotic Party. This gentleman appears to have been in the habit of returning home drunk, and upon one particular night, when in that condition—a cold and wet night—he stripped a servant girl of 14 stark naked, beat her with all his might, and then kicked her out into the road. She was picked up out of a ditch by somebody who happened to pass. This respectable gentleman—I do not know whether he is not still a magistrate—was brought up before his fellow magistrates, who convicted him and sentenced him to six months' imprisonment without hard labour. Of course, his offence was nothing like so serious a one as that of Mr. O'Brien. Beating and turning a poor little girl out into the road on a cold night in Ireland is a loyal and respectable offence, and I am told that this worthy magistrate enjoys in gaol a glass of whisky every day, and is supplied with the *Freeman's Journal*. The right hon. Gentleman says that the powers of mendacity in Ireland are absolutely inexhaustible. If the right hon. Gentleman would spend a little more time in Dublin Castle, he would see for himself that that institution is capable of challenging any other in the whole world in misrepresenting and colouring Reports in accordance with its own wishes. And now let me say a word or two upon the question of the improvement of the condition of Ireland. The Chief Secretary seems to think that he utterly crushes us by announcing that the condition of Ireland is improving. Now, I fail to see what point he desires to make from that statement. He has boasted recently of different kinds of improvement, and particularly of improvements in the amount of agrarian crime. I admit this, to a certain extent, and I rejoice at it. The only difference between us is, that the right hon. Gentleman thinks it is due to his wonderful government of Ireland, whereas I say it is due partly to the Plan of Campaign, and partly to the action of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. But there is another cause. Everybody knows that this has been a better year in England than it used to be, and so it has been in Ireland. The price of cattle has gone up enormously, and as that is one of our chief articles of supply, there has been an increase in railway dividends, and perhaps a momentary gleam of prosperity. But one of the terrible evils which presided over the fate of Ireland in the past, but which, by God's help, I trust will never curse them in the future was, that whenever periods of prosperity came and the price of cattle and stock rose, instead of being a blessing it became a moral curse to the labourer. I trust it is true that this time, at least, the poor and labouring classes may have some share in the advancing wave of prosperity, and, if so, I say that it is to be traced to the results of recent agitation. We have heard of periods of prosperity in Ireland before, and it was the custom for the Lord Lieutenant to come down and tell us *ad nauseam* of the rising tide of prosperity, predicting that Ireland would soon become the fruitful mother of flocks and herds. But although we were told that the prosperity of the country was rising by leaps and bounds, we heard also of the people flying to another country with hatred in their hearts—people who were destined to give you greater trouble in their new land than in their own. But if the condition of the Irish people has been improved by a rise in prices, it is not the Coercion Act that has increased the price of cattle—at least I have not heard that that result has been claimed for it yet. And now I come to another kind of improvement which is claimed to have taken place in Ireland—namely, the pacification of the people. I utterly traverse the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that the country has quietened down, and that peace and order have been restored where disorder prevailed before, or that a good feeling has been restored between the police and the people where ill-feeling prevailed before. But we have heard nothing this time of boycotted farms being taken; and I tell the right hon.

Gentleman again that there is no foundation whatever for the statements made by himself and his colleague, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, that boycotted farms have been taken or will be taken. He is not able to show that they are being taken, and therefore he did not allude to them. He says that, on the whole, the relations between the people and the police have improved. I utterly and absolutely deny it. Never in my experience of Irish politics—now some 13 years—do I remember as bad a feeling between the people and the police, and I could point to whole districts which, when the right hon. Gentleman came into office, were peaceable and quiet, with disturbance unknown, where the police and the people got on very well, which are now in a state of siege. Take the County of Donegal. When the right hon. Gentleman came into office, and before the Coercion Act was passed, that county was in an absolutely peaceable state. Now it is the most disturbed county in Ireland, and that disturbance has been brought about by the outrageous action, pig-headed opinions, and deliberate misconduct of the officers in charge of the county, who have done everything that human ingenuity could devise to bring about a collision between the police and the people. Let me say a word about the catastrophe which occurred there the other day. I feel bound to protest against the language used by the Chief Secretary in reference to Father M'Fadden and the prisoners who are about to be tried for murder. No doubt it was an unfortunate catastrophe and a painful occurrence, but nobody can form an accurate judgment with regard to the case unless, like us, he has watched the conduct of the police. Outrageous insults to the people have long been given at Gweedore by Inspector Martin and those under his charge, and now that they have culminated in the death of a police constable hon. Members opposite assume that they amount to murder. [Colonel SAUNDERSON: Hear, hear!] I know that that is the opinion of the hon. Member opposite. It may seem an audacious thing for me to say, but I utterly and absolutely deny that there has been any case of murder at all, according to the dying declaration of the constable who is now dead. The doctrine—and this is a matter upon which a great deal will be heard in England before the subject passes away—the doctrine attempted to be laid down by the Irish Executive is this and nothing less—that it is lawful for the police to attack peaceable people with deadly weapons without provocation, and that if the people so attacked strike a blow in self-defence, any death that may occur is murder. I deny that. I have always maintained that when an assault was made on the people in the square at Mitchelstown the people were perfectly entitled to resist, and according to sworn information I maintain that the people were entitled to resist the police at Gweedore. I am convinced that a grave and serious question will arise whether the people were not acting in self-defence and with perfect legality. If that be so, it is monstrous to assume that the police were acting within their legal right, and that the death of Inspector Martin was a murder. We know what the fate of the Nationalists is when the bloodhounds of the law, hounded on by the head of the Executive, who seems to forget every consideration of fair play, are let loose on the people. I believe that the arrest of Father M'Fadden was one of the wildest things that have ever happened in Ireland. The motive may have been to deprive the other prisoners of Father M'Fadden's evidence. At this moment the authorities are arresting every man and woman in the neighbourhood, so that the unfortunate prisoners may be able to call no evidence in their behalf. The police are sweeping the country night after night, and if to-morrow any man dare to come forward and say he was a witness of the transaction, he would immediately find himself in prison. I say that if there has been murder it is on the other side, and both in England and Ireland I shall continue to denounce the whole thing as a deliberate murder from beginning to end. What is the condition of Donegal? You found it peaceable; you have reduced the people to madness; flooded the country with police; and the last news is that a troop of dragoons is marching there, and that a gunboat employing the electric light is stationed off the coast. This is what you call concentration; and why is all this done? The forces of the Crown were refused to Lord Clanricarde, although he is threatening the Castle that he will levy

an army of his own. Why is it that Mr. Olphert, in the North of Ireland, has police, dragoons, and a gunboat placed at his service? It is because Mr. Olphert is an *aide-de-camp* at the Castle, and on that account you have reduced the county of Donegal from a state of order to a state of turmoil. In all parts of the North and West of Ireland that I am acquainted with personally the feeling of the people is becoming worse day by day, and it will soon lead you to a point of serious difficulty. I am bound to say it would be very little to the credit of the Irish people if that feeling does not increase and become more bitter, because it has now become the absolute practice of the Irish Police, acting under the incitement of the Chief Secretary and Chief Magistrates like Colonel Turner, to assault in the rudest and roughest manner, and without notice, men who are perfectly peaceable, by drawing their batons. The doctrine which is being instilled into the Irish Police is this—"Wherever you see a head, hit it; murder men; kill, if you have got a shadow of provocation, and we shall back you up in everything. No matter what you do, it will be condoned." The right hon. Gentleman boasted a few days ago that he had unproclaimed several districts. Unfortunately for that boast, the right hon. Gentleman has, while unproclaiming several baronies, proclaimed seven more. And in this regard I will just point out a most striking illustration of the way in which Ireland can be, for political purposes, represented as either boiling over or quieting down, according as the Executive Officers in Ireland may desire. A few days ago the barony of Lower Dundalk was unproclaimed, and the Secretary of the League, Patrick Largin, was aggrieved that it should be unproclaimed. He wrote to the *Freeman's Journal* asking what they had done that the district should be unproclaimed, and stating that on the previous Sunday they enrolled 500 members of the League, and that at the meeting over 600 were present. They elected their officers, and the police stood round all the time, but did not attempt to interfere. "On Monday last," he continues, "I sent £20 to the Central Branch, our subscription for our branch, and, as a proof of our branch's activity, we had bonfires all over the district a week ago to celebrate the re-instatement of a tenant in the parish of Coola, whose farm had been boycotted and kept vacant for seven years under the Coercion Act. The tenant was reinstated on his own terms, without a penny of arrears or costs, and at half the original cost. We are very anxious to do anything we can to deserve Mr. Balfour's attention, but what can we do with enemies who run away." I have not the smallest doubt in my own mind that if the statistics of derelict farms relet, given by the Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary, were examined, this Coola farm would re-appear as one of the relet farms, and I have no doubt that the list given by the Lord Lieutenant of evicted farms relet includes farms to which we have got the tenants back on the original terms. The Chief Secretary is contented, it seems to me, with the result of his government in Ireland; and, from the bottom of my heart, I can say that I am contented also. No one who knows Ireland can deny for a single moment the proposition that the Chief Secretary has succeeded in making the Castle more hateful, if possible, than it ever was previously in Ireland. Whether his administration is successful or not depends entirely on the object which the right hon. Gentleman has in view. If his object be to exasperate the people, to inflict a certain amount of punishment, and to make the people detest him and all those who serve under him, I think he has achieved a measure of success. But if his object be to conciliate in Ireland any considerable party who will support what he calls union between the two countries and the Unionist Government, then, I say, a more deplorable and disastrous failure has not been recorded in the whole of Irish history. At no period in the history of Ireland has the Unionist Party stood lower than they stand to-day. If you had the courage of your convictions, and faced us at the polls to-morrow—you will have to do it sooner or later—the people of this country would then be able to realize how much progress your great, beneficent, and wealth-bringing Government has made in the affections of the people of Ireland. I had an extract, which I think I have mislaid, of the

speech made by the right hon. Gentleman at the banquet in Dublin, which, I confess, made me laugh very heartily, because, in the course of that speech, the right hon. Gentleman said he had never, in the course of his political experience, addressed a more representative gathering. Complaints have been heard of a horrid outrage committed upon the banquetters. The atrocity was this—that the names of the guests were published. I understand that they had been going before the Courts in Dublin, weeping bitter tears, whining and groaning, and saying they never would have gone had they known their names were to be given. Let it be noted that this was the representative gathering of the "commercial and banking classes and leaders of the people" in Ireland—men who sneaked in, Crown Prosecutors, expectant place-mongers, and a very small sprinkling of those so-called mercantile men, who got the Chief Secretary, or whoever managed the banquet, to exclude the Press, nominally that the speeches might not be reported, but really that the names might not be published. If that is all the Unionist Party can show for themselves in Ireland their fortunes have reached a very low ebb. I do not think a more cruel illustration could be asked for of the great advance of the Unionist Government. Even when the Chancellor of the Exchequer went to Dublin they were not afraid to publish the names. We are getting on. But that is not all. Some of the great bank directors, who were alluded to, very much like the men in buckram, and whose names were not mentioned by the Chief Secretary, but were pointed out *in camera* as decorating the table at the representative banquet in Dublin, were questioned at the first subsequent meeting of shareholders, and they got up and apologized, and said they did not go there as directors, but under the impression that it was a private banquet, and that the names would not be published. I express no opinion as to the merits of the attacks that have been made on this banquet, but the opinion that I express is this—that it is a significant fact that the Leader of a Government with a thorough Executive at its back, with all the various machinery to bribe, to coerce, to conciliate the support, which is enjoyed to such an unparalleled extent by the Head of the Executive in Ireland, can gather around his board in an hour of crisis only so poor a body of men, whose greatest achievement was to roar with laughter when they heard of a political opponent having been knocked down and stripped naked, and who then were afraid to let their names be known to the Irish public.

*MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham): I feel it is extremely difficult to expect the House to listen to one who does not claim to possess the great gift of eloquence of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down; but there are some matters which I desire to refer to, and which appear to me of considerable importance, which have been touched upon by the hon. Member (Mr. Dillon) and the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Morley). The latter referred to the unfortunate occurrences at Gweedore, and the hon. Member (Mr. Dillon) said that he believed there was not the smallest authority for saying that under any circumstances the death of Inspector Martin could be the crime of wilful murder. There cannot, however, be the smallest possible doubt that the person or persons who caused Inspector Martin's death were guilty of the crime of murder. That matter has been placed beyond the possibility of controversy, because the subject was very thoroughly considered at the time of the murder of Sergeant Brett at Manchester, and Mr. Justice Blackburn and Lord Justice Mellor declined to grant a case on the ground that the point of whether or not the act was one of murder was too clear for argument, and in Mr. Justice Stephen's "Digest of the Criminal Law" it is set forth that when a constable or other person properly authorized acts in the execution of his duty the law casts a peculiar protection around him; and consequently, if he is killed in the execution of his duty, it is murder, even though there be such circumstances of hot blood and want of premeditation as would in ordinary cases reduce the crime to manslaughter. There cannot be the smallest doubt that Inspector Martin was murdered by some person or persons. That is the law of England and the law of Ireland. Now, the right hon. Gentleman, in support of his Amendment, quotes this case from the

Freeman's Journal, an authority which we on this side of the House, at any rate, do not consider an absolutely trustworthy authority. It is that of a person called upon by the magistrate to find bail himself for £5, and two sureties for £2 each, to keep the peace, for having cheered Mr. O'Brien. The right hon. Gentleman submitted that this was not the law in England, and that no Home Secretary would venture to act so if it were. I must really remind the right hon. Gentleman that such a power is inherent in the ordinary Justice of the Peace, whether a Resident Magistrate in Ireland or an ordinary Justice in England. If he thinks the action of any individual is likely to provoke a breach of the peace, the magistrate is perfectly entitled, by virtue of his authority, to call upon that person to find sureties for the peace. It has nothing whatever to do with the Crimes Act. I agree that the Home Secretary has nothing to do with matters of that kind, except to advise Her Majesty when a person should be pardoned, but nobody ever said he had. Quoting other instances from the *Freeman*, the right hon. Gentleman said that one person was bound over for hissing Mr. Cecil Roche. If it be true that there never was a time when the relations between the people and the police were so strained as the hon. Member for East Mayo contends, will any hon. Member deny that a Justice of the Peace was right in so acting? The right hon. Gentleman also says that Colonel Turner ordered four policemen to charge among some youths, and beat them in a merciless way. I should like that statement to be verified. I do not believe a word of it. And the right hon. Gentleman's story that one person, for laughing at a constable, in default of finding sureties, was sent to gaol for three months, is one that requires investigation. Why did not the right hon. Gentleman investigate the charge before he came to the House and made the statement with all his authority as a Privy Councillor, and a man who may some day be Prime Minister for aught I know? When asked for an authority, all he could say was that it was not from the *Freeman's Journal*, and that he did not vouch for its accuracy. The next case the right hon. Gentleman came to was that of Mr. Harrington, and he commented upon the circumstance that the magistrate had promised to let Mr. Harrington off if he did not offend again. Anyone who has any experience of the administration of the law in this country knows very well that it is the ordinary practice of Chairmen of Quarter Sessions and of Her Majesty's Judges to abstain from passing any sentence at all upon the person convicted under certain circumstances, on their giving an undertaking not to offend again. Then, referring to the case of Mr. Harrington and Mr. Carew, the right hon. Gentleman alluded to their sentences, and said—"Just consider Mr. Carew gets four months and Mr. Harrington six." After 17 years' experience of the law of England, I, like many others, concur that there is nothing so unsatisfactory in the administration of it as the unequal sentences which are passed. One Judge may give five years' penal servitude for a crime for which another may give six months. Very often, to use a vulgar phrase, it is a "toss up" what sentence a prisoner gets. Then the right hon. Gentleman made reference to the fact of imprisoned Members being compelled to wear the prison dress when appearing as witnesses, while Delaney appeared before the Special Commission in his own clothes. I have never known an instance in which prisoners called upon to give evidence did not appear in prison dress.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Why was Delaney not brought up in prison clothes?

MR. FULTON: I am not responsible for that. I am simply pointing out the fact.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Does the hon. Gentleman apply that to misdemeanants in this country, of which I know a dozen instances, or only to felons?

MR. FULTON: I am not aware of any distinction whatever between the case of a misdemeanant and a felon. I know of no instance in my experience of a convict giving evidence except in ordinary prison dress, save that of Delaney, to which reference is now made. The right hon. Gentleman said the history of this Parliament was one long fraud upon the constituencies. But what had

the right hon. Gentleman to say about the hon. Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire (Mr. Winterbotham), who, in consideration of being a Liberal Unionist, was allowed a walk-over in his constituency? Now, that hon. Member, so far as I know, has never once supported the Government. He did not act like the hon. Member for West Edinburgh, who returned to his constituents when he found himself unable to support the policy of the Government. I do not altogether approve of some of the acts which have taken place in Ireland. It is unfortunate there should be so long a delay in instituting prosecutions in Ireland. We find Mr. Carew, for instance, making a speech in November, and he is prosecuted in the month of January. It is a very great pity that Mr. O'Brien should make a speech in the month of September, and that he should not be prosecuted until November. So far as I am concerned, I think it desirable, if the law is to be set in force, that it should be done as quickly as possible. I have been very much struck by the fact that during the last few months there has been a great increase in the number of Members of this House who have been sent to prison. I have asked myself, is there any special reason why that should be so, and I have come to the conclusion that there is a reason. It is this. For the first time since the Chief Secretary filled the position which he now holds, there were signs during the last Autumn Session that the hand of the Government was beginning to be relaxed. They were beginning to make distinctions between Members of this House who had offended against the law and persons who were not Members. They did so in two notable ways. When some time ago the Chief Secretary for Ireland was questioned in this House as to the practice of arresting Irish Members of Parliament on a warrant in this country he made an answer that, acting on the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown, he did so because the service of a summons granted in Ireland was not good service in England. Therefore, there was no other means of arrest except by warrant backed by a magistrate in this country. Last Session, out of humanity and a desire not to inconvenience Members of this House more than he could possibly help, he substituted the service of what was practically a worthless document—a summons. He granted that as a special favour to Members of this House. I am very strongly of opinion it is not the slightest use endeavouring to conciliate hon. Members opposite by any means of that sort. That was not all. There was another—a still more dangerous—departure from the straight and narrow road of absolute legality. Questions were pertinaciously asked by the Member for West Belfast as to whether the Chief Secretary would prevent service of processes during the continuance of the Autumn Session? I was of opinion then, and I am of opinion now, that the action of the Chief Secretary was most unfortunate and most unconstitutional. I do not think that there exists any power whatever in the Irish Attorney General of controlling a Court of Law in the execution of ordinary process, nor is any power of that kind possessed by the English Attorney General. I am quite sure that the Solicitor General (Sir Edward Clarke), whom I see here, would admit that he had no power to control a Court of Law as to when or how criminal process should be served. It seems to me that the Government, in these two things, showed signs of giving way. Signs of giving way on questions such as these are a great mistake, and the sooner we desist from giving way the better, because I am quite sure there is only one way of bringing this great contest to a successful close, and that is by continuing to walk in the straight and narrow road of absolute legality and Constitutional usage; to extend to all law-breakers alike the same even measure of justice, whether he be a Member of this House or a humble peasant. It is my firm conviction it is only by an impartial administration of the law that we can hope to be successful in the great battle which lies before us. I said, in the first speech I delivered in this House, we are standing on the threshold of a great controversy—a great battle. I am not afraid of it. As long as the Government stand to their guns, as long as they continue to act as they have hitherto acted—with these two exceptions—with absolute impartiality to all Her Majesty's subjects, I have the most perfect confidence in the ultimate

result. I have confidence in the good sense, common justice, and common honesty of my fellow-countrymen. I believe, if we only continue to act with firmness and impartiality, we shall be successful when the time comes in the great battle we have to fight for the continued union of these kingdoms.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): The hon. and learned Gentleman who last spoke referred to the case of Mr. Edward Harrington, and he says it is by no means unusual for a magistrate to say practically to a prisoner, "If you will give an undertaking not to offend again, I will abstain from passing any sentence upon you." Well, Sir, I am not prepared to say that this is not occasionally done, but I think my hon. and learned Friend has completely mistaken the point of the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle. He complains not of the action of the magistrate in offering to inflict no punishment if a promise were given not to offend again, but because the magistrate made this offer in respect of an offence which, when the offer was declined, he considered that six months' hard labour was the only adequate punishment for. And I think that my hon. and learned Friend, with all his great experience at the criminal bar, would have very considerable difficulty indeed in extracting from the criminal annals in this country a parallel case. Again, my hon. and learned Friend referred in terms of indignation—I know not whether it was real or assumed, and it is not for me to say—to the votes which have been given in this House by the hon. Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire since his return in 1886. Mr. Speaker, these indignant expostulations which he levelled against my hon. Friend ought, with far greater propriety, to have been applied to his own hon. and gallant colleague, the hon. and gallant Member for the Bow and Bromley Division of the Tower Hamlets. Upon these points both these hon. Members are precisely in the same boat. In 1886 each of them pledged himself against Coercion, but the hon. Member for the Cirencester Division has been honest enough to keep his pledge, while the hon. and gallant Member for Bow has grossly violated his. The Irish Secretary complains of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, because he did not in his speech last night dilate upon the details of the notorious scenes which have occurred in Irish prisons, and he entered into explanations denying the accuracy of certain statements which have been published in regard to them. The denials of the Irish Secretary remind me of an incident related at a recent meeting of the Royal Geographical Society by one of our great travellers, who stated that he was visiting a tribe which was shrewdly suspected of cannibalism. He asked a lady member of the tribe whether she had ever eaten "white man," and she indignantly denied it; but presently, as if to relieve her conscience, added, "I have tasted soup made from him." There is one particular part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech to which I desire to refer. The right hon. Gentleman said that every person who had been punished in Ireland had been punished either for crime or for incitement to crime. Now, Sir, it seems to me that the crux of the whole controversy lies in this: What is incitement to crime? The Irish Secretary seems to have fallen into a great confusion of thought which led him to ask triumphantly, upon the one hand, whether dynamite outrages were political offences, and, on the other hand, why, when the Corrupt Practices Act was before this House, hon. Gentlemen on this side insisted that the offenders convicted under it should be treated as ordinary criminals. Now, I think that we, upon this side of the House, are not only willing, but we are anxious that everyone who, for instance, attempts to blow up this House, or who lays a finger upon the land-grabber in Ireland, shall be punished by the law and treated as an ordinary criminal. But when the right hon. Gentleman starts a quibble about incitement to crime, we have a right to ask that, at any rate, there should be established, clearly, connection between the incitement and the crime. The right hon. Gentleman has not been ashamed to throw at hon. Members who sit on these benches wholesale charges of incitement to crime. Well, Sir, there are historical instances, no doubt well known to the right hon. Gentleman, which I think should cause him to hesitate, and cause us to hesitate also, before we

endeavour to connect crime with public action. It will be remembered that in 1843, during the Corn Law agitation, there was much disturbance and violence; and Mr. Drummond, the Secretary to the Prime Minister, was assassinated, as was generally believed, in mistake for the Prime Minister. Well, on the 17th February in that year, the Prime Minister came down to this House, and, standing at that Table, deliberately charged Mr. Cobden with having used language calculated or designed to incite persons to assassination, because, forsooth, Mr. Cobden had, at various conferences of the League, declared that he should hold the Prime Minister responsible for the condition of the country. I do not recall that incident to-night, Sir, in order to cast any slur on the illustrious memory of Sir Robert Peel. I quote it simply to show how ridiculously the best of men may be misled when once they surrender themselves to associate crime with the public utterances of their political opponents. I was surprised at the Irish Secretary's references to Daniel O'Connell. He described him as an Irish patriot; yet Daniel O'Connell was prosecuted by the Government of his day, and the Attorney General, who led the prosecution, made almost word for word the indictment which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has on this occasion charged against the hon. Member for Cork, against Mr. William O'Brien, and against their friends. I could quote many instances in which these charges against Mr. Parnell correspond with those levelled against Daniel O'Connell; it is the old interminable story. There is no abuse so foul—there is no imputation so base—but that it may be heaped upon the head of an Irish patriot whilst he lives; but when he has been some generations in his grave then he is canonized by the *Times* newspaper, and the great name of Daniel O'Connell suffers the indignity of being eulogized by the lips of the Irish Secretary to-day. And 20 years hence, if we could imagine this *régime* lasting so long, the successor to the Irish Secretary would rise in his place in the House, and would talk about the patriot Parnell then, as the right hon. Gentleman now talks about the patriot O'Connell. He would compare the patriot Parnell with the Leader of the Irish Party of that day, very much, of course, to that Leader's detriment. I had intended to address an earnest appeal to the Irish Secretary. I am sorry he is not in his place; but let me tell him that the course on which he has embarked can lead to no good. It is bad in its immediate effects; it will be infinitely worse in its ulterior effects. I hope to God that there will never be any Party in the State, when its turn comes to triumph, which will treat its political opponents as the Irish Secretary has treated his political opponents, and as he is treating them in the Irish prisons to-day. But, Mr. Speaker, this is not a visionary danger, for if there is one lesson which is to be learnt from history, it is that the effects of such a course as that which Her Majesty's Ministers are pursuing have an inevitable tendency to demoralize the people. I cannot hope that my words will produce the slightest effect upon the Irish Secretary or his Friends; but, as he has professed such great respect for Daniel O'Connell, let me then, in sitting down, warn him in the solemn words of the Irish patriot and orator. He said—

"You know not how soon and how bitterly the ingredients of your poisoned chalice may be commended to your own lips."

MR. SWIFT MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) rose, and an hon. Member having called attention to the number of Members present, the Speaker counted, and, 40 Members being in their places, the hon. Member proceeded:—The speech we have heard from the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite was in the usual form, and ran over the familiar lines, reminding me of those Jews mentioned by Josephus who ran about the streets of Jerusalem with cries of woe. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has repeated the substance of a speech he made at Portadown the other day, and more than 20 years ago I find a speech made in that same town prophesying, as the hon. Gentleman has, civil war. The dreaded cause then was the Disestablishment of the Irish Church. In May, 1868, the Rev. M. T. Ellis spoke in similar terms to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, declaring he and others would fight sword in hand and die for the cause in which their fathers had died, with the dying cry echoed from Earth to Heaven, "No Popery!" "No Surrender!" No par-

ticular result, however, followed all the talk in this strain. We are often told by the Chief Secretary, when he is engaged in defending his Coercion policy, and the statement seems to amply satisfy him, that Lord Spencer and Mr. Forster did the same thing. There was, no doubt, coercion in Mr. Forster's time, but there was a wide difference, in that it was not then a policy of exasperation. The policy of Coercion which was pursued by Lord Spencer and Mr. Forster produced great pain and suffering in Ireland, but the pain was also felt by the statesmen who adopted that policy. A policy of exasperation is a very different thing. I never admired Mr. Forster, but I respect his memory; and I may say that nothing would have induced him to adopt personal persecution towards his political opponents. The Chief Secretary has bestowed some praise upon O'Connell. Well, I do not know how O'Connell, if alive, would receive such praise; but I remember a remark he made in reference to a personal and jocular allusion of a Chief Secretary of his day, that it was "something like a sunbeam touching the brass plate of a coffin." With reference to the right hon. Gentleman's allusion to the men of '98, I may say that I have read and written much on the subject; and it is clear as any fact in history that the Government of the day goaded the people into rebellion. God forbid I should bring any such charge against the Ministers of to-day; but this I say, with some knowledge of the subject, that had that been your intention, you could find no better means of carrying it out than by your policy of the last three years. All the efforts of the Nationalist Party in Ireland—all the efforts of the Irish Leaders—would have been totally ineffective to allay the popular irritation, were it not that, for the first time in history, we have the support of the great Liberal Party. That alone prevents the Ireland of the present day becoming the pandemonium it was in 1798. We are the successors of the rebels of 1798, and are proud to be so. Many mistakes they may have made, but their motives were just, noble, and righteous. Again I refer to history, and declare that there was no attempt or idea of armed resistance in 1798 until all Constitutional agitation had failed. If the rebels of 1798 had had, as we have now, the head of the Liberal Party and the heart of England with them, they would have been content to wait until they received liberty, equality, and equal rights. The policy of conciliation has made these sometime rebels join hand and heart with the people of England. We have challenged your treatment of prisoners in Ireland, and you reply, there should be equal treatment in England and Ireland. Yes, there should; but there cannot be while your laws in the two countries are distinctly unequal and administered in a wholly different spirit. Where in England have you anything like the system of jury packing which, according to the *Dublin Express*, a Conservative paper, makes trial by jury in political or *quasi*-political offences a mere pretence? The hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin, the Chairman of Committees, says that in Ireland there is a great system working for justice and equity, although there are imperfections in its instruments. Who are the instruments of this system? They are simply the persons called Resident Magistrates. They are the pillars of the plank-bed system. They are the persons on whom the Government rely. They are, directly or indirectly, under the influence of the Crown, and these were selected to administer the Coercion Act. In England judicial officers are wholly independent of the Crown, but in Ireland they are dismissible at a moment's notice, and I assert that their decisions are not directly but indirectly influenced by the Crown, because human nature must be more than it ever will be if men whose means of livelihood are dependent on the favour of the Crown are not affected by that supreme consideration. These men are brought up from their counties to hold interviews with the Chief Secretary in Dublin Castle. No doubt the Chief Secretary said they did not come up to him for political purposes. What did they come up for then? Was it to talk about the weather, or the success or want of success of the *Times* trial? Disguise it as you may, these men went down to their districts to fulfil the behests, either expressed or implied, of their master, the Chief Secretary. The whole thing, as was said by Mr. W. O'Brien, is a grotesque and hideous farce. It will be within the Solicitor

General for Ireland's recollection that so far back as 1874 Mr. Cecil Roche was chosen auditor for the Session of Trinity College, and chose for the subject of his address an attack on Home Rule, and so violent was it that the Board of Senior Fellows actually took the extreme step of suppressing the address and not allowing the meeting to be held. And this was the man who was chosen to try Mr. W. O'Brien. Mr. Cecil Roche went into England at the recent election to speak for the Unionist Party, and it appeared from a correspondence in the newspapers that his hotel and travelling expenses were paid, and through whom? Through the hands of the distinguished Secretary of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, Mr. Houston. Captain Seagrave, who represented the military order of judicial chivalry in Ireland, was appointed a Resident Magistrate in October, 1886, and he was in command of the forces at Mitchelstown when three human beings were killed. Now, I hold in my hand an extract from the *Cape of Good Hope Gazette* in which it is stated that Captain Seagrave's services are dispensed with from the Colonial Service. It can be got from the Agent General of the Cape of Good Hope, or I should think from the Colonial Office—for surely the document is one which should find a place there. Here is this man's dismissal. The House knows very well what is the meaning of a person's services "being dispensed" with. It does not mean being cashiered, but it means dismissal with a stigma. Well, I say, from this document, that the man who was in command of the military and police when these shocking occurrences happened at Mitchelstown was a man who had been dismissed from his post at the Cape with ignominy; and I ask are we, in order to administer law and order in Ireland, to take up the castaways of the Colonies? In cross-examination at the Coroner's inquest Captain Seagrave stated that he had had no legal training, that he had got his military training in South Africa, never having had a commission in the Home Army, and that, though he had tried three times to pass a military examination at home, he had failed on each occasion. This was the gentleman who has sentenced a priest to six weeks' imprisonment and a Member of Parliament to three weeks' imprisonment. The late Lord Rosse, in a conversation with Mr. Nassau Senior, said that one way to improve the magistracy was to get rid of Resident Magistrates, that no appointments were so infamously jobbed, and that no special education and no talents seemed to be necessary. This statement is strongly borne out by this incident of Captain Seagrave. At a loss to imagine how this young, inexperienced man came to be appointed to the Magistracy, I had recourse to "Burke's Landed Gentry," and I there found that Captain Seagrave was the son of a magistrate for three or four counties, and the brother-in-law of a well-known Unionist, circumstances which easily account for the singular appointment. And now, as a Representative of Donegal, I would speak just one word with regard to the shocking occurrence which occurred in the presence of Father M'Fadden. The arrest of this priest, and subsequently the arrest of Father Stephens, under the circumstances in which they took place, were peculiarly irritating to men who look to their priest as their only friend, their protector, and defender; and, I ask, why invest a hateful law with irritating and humiliating incidents which renders it ten times more hateful? I agree entirely with that part of the Amendment which says, that "this system is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain." The right hon. Member for Newcastle winds up with recommending a policy of conciliation towards Ireland. I cannot but think that the right hon. Gentleman, when drawing up his Amendment, had in his mind the policy of that great man whose life he has written—Edmund Burke. If in the time of Lord North we had pursued the policy of conciliation advocated by Burke, the American Colonies would have been one with us to-day. Brinsley Sheridan long ago pointed out the fallacy of the assertion that there is no alternative between the Act of Union and total separation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has proposed the real solution of the Irish problem, and by that proposal has already wiped out from Irish hearts the memory of seven centuries of wrong.

*MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) said: It is not my intention to

intervene for more than a very few minutes in the course of the debate, but I cannot refrain from expressing the opinion that the solidarity which exists between the Party above and the Party below the Gangway on this side of the House, so far from being diminished, is likely, on the contrary, to be greatly cemented by the review which has taken place in the course of these debates of the events which have transpired in Ireland during the last few months. Reference has been made in the course of the debate, and allusion has been made in the course of the discussions which have been going on throughout the length and breadth of the land, to the various points of this measure of Coercion; but it appears to me that the methods by which this Act is being administered may be grouped under three heads. In the first place, we have attempts to impair the right of free speech, in so far as that right of free speech may be brought to bear on the right of combination; in the second place, we have endeavours to impair the right of a free Press, in so far as freedom of the Press concerns the purposes of combination; and, in the third place, we have attempts directed mainly and constantly against combination itself. Well, it seems to me, therefore, that, on all these grounds, we cannot altogether dissociate the agrarian from the political problem in Ireland. The treatment of political prisoners is, no doubt, one of the matters under the consideration of the House. But it seems to me that, in order to go to the root of the matter, we must consider the manner in which the Government have neglected on the one hand to attempt those remedies for agrarian grievances which are most urgently needed, and the manner in which they, instead of carrying out these remedies, have turned their attention to remedies which are in no way to be desired. Again and again it was urged last Session and the Session before that the great and principal grievance in Ireland at the present time was the fact that the question of arrears had been left open. It was urged that the Land Act of 1887, which was brought in as a companion measure to the Coercion Bill of that year, was merely intended for the purpose of gilding the pill. We were told that in that measure evictions were to be done away with, and also the question of arrears to be settled. But it turned out that, instead of evictions being done away with, processes were actually rendered more easy, inasmuch as in place of the first process, which formerly took place in the light of open day, and subject to public criticism, we had a surreptitious and hidden process substituted, by which the landlord, by merely sending out a writ in the shape of a registered letter, was able to turn a tenant into a caretaker, and thereby deprive him of all his property in improvements which law and custom declared to be as much his property as the land was the property of the landlord. Another thing we urged against the Act of 1887 was that it entirely failed to deal with the great grievance that was the bane of the poor districts of Ireland—namely, that owing to the millstone of arrears hanging round the necks of the tenants, the landlord had it in his power, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, to evict without compensation. Attempts were made below the Gangway on this side of the House, and also above the Gangway, to get that grievance remedied, but the only alternative which was offered by the Chief Secretary was that if the question of arrears were dealt with at all, the debts due to the shopkeeper would be treated exactly in the same manner as the debts due to the landlord. In making that offer the Chief Secretary was under the same error as the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh was under when he compared the operation of the Plan of Campaign in Ireland to what it would be in Cheshire or Flintshire. He ignored the great and cardinal point concerning land in Ireland—namely, the dual ownership, Parliament having conferred on the tenant in that country certain rights of property in the land in connection with the improvements, which the tenant does not possess in this country. The alternative which the Chief Secretary offered was that the debts due to the shopkeeper should be dealt with on the same footing as the arrears of rent due to the landlord. That proposition of the Chief Secretary was, after all, simply a proposal that the shopkeeping Peter should be robbed of his just dues in order to pay the unjust dues of the landowning Paul. If any Com-

mission at any time declares that the present rent of a tenant ought to be reduced 50 per cent, it is preposterous and altogether illogical not to give that Commission power to deal with arrears of rent, which ought, on that showing, to be equally unjust and exorbitant at the rent. All that the Chief Secretary proposes is that the arrears should be spread over a certain interval, which is no remedy at all, because, if the rent is unjust and exorbitant and cannot be paid, the arrears also are unjust and exorbitant and ought not to be paid. The Liberal Party have urged that it is necessary to deal with the question of arrears, and that the agricultural problem lies at the root of most of the disputes taking place in Ireland, and it has been shown again and again that most of the imprisonments which have taken place in that country under the Crimes Act have been connected, directly or indirectly, with some agrarian dispute. It seems to me that the conclusion to be drawn from that is that the administration of this Crimes Act should be reviewed side by side with the administration of the Land Act. We should judge the one by the other, and, doing that, we cannot fail to come to the conclusion that in all these attempts to suppress free speech, and to put down the freedom of the Press, and to put a stop to combination, the administrators of the Crimes Act have had in view the propping up of a system of landlordism unsuited to the needs of the country, and the outcome is a state of things which is against the feeling of justice which animates the great mass of the people, not only of Ireland, but also of England, and which ought at once to be done away with. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Col. Saunderson), in the course of his speech to-night, gave vent to a certain amount of buffoonery and to a certain amount of braggadocio, but it seems to me that that buffoonery was considerably misplaced, and that that braggadocio, considering the events of the past few days, was particularly ill-timed. One point the hon. and gallant Member appeared to lay most stress upon was the way in which political prisoners had been treated under the Crimes Act. He endeavoured to dispute the statement made on this side of the House, that the treatment of the Nationalist Members was of a different character to the treatment of other offenders, such, for instance, as those mentioned in the subsequent speech of the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon)—those Orange offenders of the City of Belfast, but I do net think the hon. and gallant Gentleman is very successful. It appears to me, therefore, that not only ought we to consider the question in its agrarian aspect, but we should bear in mind the object the Crimes Act has in view, and the peculiarly unjust and preposterous way in which that Act has been administered, and the vindictive spirit which has been shown to certain individuals. On a previous occasion I took the opportunity of referring to a case that had attracted my notice in a special degree, and that was the case of Mr. John Roche. This man was arrested three times for various crimes within a short space of time, and similar vindictiveness was displayed in the case of Mr. E. Harrington. Although the magistrates could not prove Mr. Harrington guilty of making an illegal speech, they could prove him guilty of having reported one, and that was the ground upon which they visited him with the most severe imprisonment it was possible for them to inflict. There was a vindictive sentence of six months' imprisonment with hard labour passed upon him. The policy of exasperation has been persistently pursued in Ireland by the present Administration; but they are acting like drowning men catching at straws, for they know that after their present lease of power terminates, never again will they have an opportunity of trying the policy of coercion. The events which have occurred within the last few days tend to show that the policy of resistance to justice and liberty is mainly directed to the maintenance of landlordism. The speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh shows that there still exist in Ireland some of those whose scruples may be perfectly conscientious, but which can only be attributed to a spirit of bigotry which ought to have disappeared long ago. If the policy of the Government is supported on the one side by bigotry and bigots, it is also supported on the other by pigottry and Pigotts. The solidarity of the alliance

which exists between the Party below and the Party above the Gangway, instead of being weakened by what has occurred, ought to be cemented more closely by the revelations of that policy which have been placed before us by the Chief Secretary. Probably no more humiliating spectacle was ever witnessed in this House than the attitude of the Chief Secretary in the course of the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo. The hon. Member proved conclusively that in his letter to Mr. Armitage the right hon. Gentleman was guilty of a culpable *suppressio veri*, and we can only form our own conclusions in regard to the proceedings of the Government when we find that the Chief Secretary is unable to refute accusations of that kind. I think we can already see the dawning of a brighter and a happier day, when all this policy of exasperation and vindictiveness will be swept away. In one instance an hon. Member of this House (Mr. Finucane) was convicted and sent to prison because he had listened without remonstrance to a speech made by another person, and was therefore taken to be a consenting party to it. Surely it is absurd to expect every person who happens to be upon a platform at a public meeting to get up one after another and refute and contradict the statements of other speakers. Let me mention an instance which shows how this principle might be made to apply to the Chief Secretary himself. Not long ago the right hon. Gentleman attended a Conservative demonstration at Staleybridge, and in the course of his speech he took occasion to mention the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Voices were immediately heard in the crowd. I suppose, if it had taken place at a Liberal meeting, the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh would have said they came from disciples of the hon. Member for Mayo, and therefore we on this side are justified in saying that they were the voices of the disciples of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh. The voices, on the name of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian being mentioned, called out, "Shoot him." If the same course had been taken as that which was taken in the case of Mr. Finucane, a charge might have been preferred against the Chief Secretary of having connived, by a tacit assent, at the suggested assassination of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, and it would be impossible for any man to escape responsibility for speeches, innocent or otherwise, that were made by other persons who addressed a meeting from the same platform. Every man who speaks ought only to be responsible for what he says himself, and that such a charge should have been made against Mr. Finucane shows, in my opinion, how far the policy of vindictiveness and exasperation is being carried out. For these reasons I heartily concur in the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, believing that it would be highly inopportune for the House, by its vote or by its silence, to consent to the felicitations contained in Her Majesty's Speech on the improvement in the state of Ireland.

*Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): The speech of the hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. Mac Neill) contained a most unfair attack upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. It must be remembered that the right hon. Gentleman occupies an extremely difficult position, and a position of great responsibility, seeing that he has to contend with those who, the hon. Member for South Donegal tells us, are the successors of the rebels of 1798. That is the position which the hon. and learned Member has proudly asserted for himself. It is not to be supposed that the right hon. Gentleman can fight those persons with kid gloves. The object of the Members below the Gangway and their associates above the Gangway is sometimes forgotten. It is therefore necessary to advert to occurrences and speeches which are now conveniently overlooked, and to recall to the memory of the House that the comparatively mild utterances of some hon. Members in this House, and before English and Scotch audiences, are very different from the utterances of the same gentlemen in Ireland, where it has been plainly pointed out that the object of the confederacy which the Chief Secretary has to contend with is to sever the links that bind Ireland to England. The hon. Member for South Donegal, in claiming to be a successor of the rebels of 1798, conveniently forgot that their great

object was to establish a Republic in Ireland on the model of the French Republic, and that their efforts at all times were directed not to the formation of a Parliament that would profess loyal allegiance to the Crown of England, but to separate the Government of Ireland altogether from that of the United Kingdom. It is sometimes convenient to forget history, and the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, in asking us to study history for ourselves, seems to consider that history ought to be re-written, and that the records of the rebels of '98 ought either to be blotted out, or that their rebellion against lawful authority should be treated as if it were a meritorious act. When the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan) was Chief Secretary, and I occupied a subordinate position in connection with the Irish Fishery Department, he was pleased to write me a letter in which he stated that the Members of the Conservative Party had rendered him most loyal assistance in carrying on the government of the country. His allusions to the gentlemen who are now his associates were not of so complimentary a character. It is convenient sometimes to forget these things, and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would now like to blot out the memory of the services rendered to him by the Conservative Party in Ireland when he was abused, and vilified, and calumniated by the Members of the Nationalist Party.

DR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.): I rise to a point of order. Is it competent for the hon. Gentleman to say that a right hon. Gentleman has been slandered by Members of this House?

MR. SPEAKER made no reply; and——

*MR. JOHNSTON continued: The hon. Member has a most convenient memory if he can forget the columns of *United Ireland*, and how bitterly the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division was vilified in them when he filled the Office of Chief Secretary. There is scarcely any slander against the present Chief Secretary which was not even more bitterly indulged in against the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division. It is not necessary that I should say a word in defence of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh, but I may be permitted to say that there is a solid and compact organization in Ireland, having its ramifications throughout the British Empire, which is resolutely determined to stand by the integrity of the Union of the British Empire and the honour of the Crown. My hon. and gallant Friend was accused by the last speaker of indulging in buffoonery and braggadocio in remarks he has made as to the attitude that will be taken by the loyal population of Ulster in the event of an Irish Parliament attempting to legislate for them. Perhaps it is well that I should mention on this occasion that, when the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian seemed likely to attain his object, and to establish in Ireland the Parliament which has been so long asked for by the Parnellites, I and my Friends were preparing actively and energetically for all eventualities, and that men were sending in their names who were perfectly prepared to justify by action the words which were uttered. It would have been very easy for the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, if such a Parliament had been established, to have placed 50,000 men in opposition to the successors of the rebels of '98. There is one portion of the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to Ireland which I am not altogether prepared to justify. I think they ought to interfere with the entirely unlicensed liberty of Press publication in Ireland. In former days, when rebellion and sedition were rampant in the land, the Press was interfered with, and those who incited to acts of sedition were prevented from promulgating in the pages of the newspapers those seditious doctrines which have caused so much mischief in that country. I hope the utterances of hon. Members opposite in this House or in the country will not cause the nation to forget the object they have had in view, which they have seldom hesitated to express when they truly spoke their sentiments, and did not cover their purpose with expressions which were intended to disguise and not to reveal their intentions. The object of hon. Members opposite and those who are associated with them is the dismemberment of the Empire. It is all very well to talk about promoting a better feeling between the two countries. Humbug is not a Parlia-

mentary expression, and therefore I will not use it—[*laughter*]—I think there are some hon. Members opposite who must indulge in laughter when they think of the ready credence which is given to their professions of friendship for this country. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has done more to bring about the disruption and the disintegration of the Empire than a foreign foe could have done in 50 years. Hon. Members below the Gangway opposite now pose in a new attitude as friends of the British Empire. Not so long ago, at certain meetings, the Mahdi was cheered because he was the enemy of England, and in the time of the Indian Mutiny the name of the devil was cheered by disloyalists in Ireland. I do not mean to suggest that that personage is the friend of the hon. Gentlemen opposite. A too ready applause is given to anyone at home or abroad who declares himself the enemy of England, and desirous of bringing about her downfall. In my opinion, the course right hon. and hon. Members opposite have adopted and the policy they have sanctioned will bring about in its eventuality the greatest curse to the country, and, if successfully carried out, it will involve the British Empire in ruin. I cannot help thinking that those who support it, either treacherously or timorously, deserve the reprobation of those who desire to see the great British Empire progressing, in the interests of humanity; and not its right arm paralyzed in a day of difficulty and danger, when we ought to be solid and united for the coming conflict, and when the efforts of all earnest and honest citizens ought to be given to promote the safety, honour, and welfare of the dominions of the Queen.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): There was one speech made to-night which, I think, the House could not help hearing with regret.—I mean the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh. I do not think the tone of that speech was such as to afford any hope that the hon. and gallant Gentleman himself would approach this question at any time, in the course of his career, in a rational and statesmanlike manner. It seemed to me—and I cannot help thinking that my hon. Friends below the Gangway share that opinion—to be a speech more suited to an enthusiastic audience at an Orange meeting in the North of Ireland than to a deliberative Assembly. I do not propose to reply to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member, but with the permission of the House my observations will be addressed to the consideration whether the treatment which has been adopted by this Government towards certain Liberal Members is that which we ought to have expected from any Government representing the democracy of this country. The Chief Secretary, in a speech which was, undoubtedly, of considerable ability, conceded one point which I think, to a large extent, demolished his answer to the charges which have been made against him. He conceded that Mr. O'Brien and his friends, who are now in prison, are political offenders, and he conceded also that these Gentlemen have been actuated by the highest possible motives—namely, that they have obeyed the dictates of their conscience. Now my contention is—and I think it will find a response throughout the country—that political offenders should receive a totally different treatment from that to which ordinary prisoners are subjected. The difference should not be in the severity, but in the form of the punishment. The political offender should not be submitted to any punishment which is inconsistent with the moral nature of his offence and the objects which he has in view. You may have to take the life of a man, but there is no reason why you should scalp him or mutilate him. The Chief Secretary is, I think, the first responsible English Minister who has refused to recognize the widely marked difference which ought to exist between political offences and ordinary crime. Some time ago I placed on the paper a Motion for a Return of the treatment of political offenders, but it has been intimated to me by Her Majesty's Government that do not intend to grant it. Yet I may observe that a Return, which was moved for in similar terms nearly 50 years ago, was granted by the Minister of that day. I am told that the main objection to the Return is the difficulty of defining political offences. In the year 1840, and for many years antecedent, there was a great amount of social and political disturbance in this country, and in the year I have mentioned a large number of persons were

imprisoned for political offences. These prisoners were not the gentlemen wearing broadcloth, of whom we have heard to-night, nor were they distinguished and eloquent Parliamentarians. They belonged to such humble classes as those of the North Country miner and the Metroplitan labourer; and I find, among the offences of which they were convicted, and for which they were committed to gaol for various terms, there were such as the one I am about to cite. One man was convicted of having stolen a shot-belt, gun, and ammunition—an offence which certainly does not compare favourably with that of which Mr. O'Brien has been convicted, and yet that prisoner—a poor, humble man, belonging to the working class—was allowed privileges which are altogether denied to Mr. O'Brien. For instance, he had the free use of pen, ink, and paper, was allowed to read the daily newspapers, and was also permitted to partake of food of a much superior character to that served out as the dietary of the ordinary prisoners. Beyond this, he was allowed to see his friends, almost at will, and, further, was permitted—this being no small matter, when we consider, by the light of what has lately happened, what personal degradation means—to wear his own clothes. There was another case—and I will not weary the House with numbers of others that might be gone into—in which a man was imprisoned for having entered, or attempted to enter, and partly demolished a dwelling house. He, also, belonged to the labouring class, and, while undergoing the punishment accorded to him, was permitted to enjoy the same exceptional treatment, the same favours and alleviations, as were allowed in the case of the prisoner I have already mentioned. I will only add on this point that I hold in my hand a list, extending over almost every county in England, and a large number of counties in Ireland, in which men were convicted of political offences of a gravity at least equal to that of Mr. O'Brien, and were treated, while in confinement, with the greatest consideration and kindness. This being the case, I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—or, as he is now absent from the House, either of the subordinate officials on the front bench opposite, why it is that a different punishment to that meted out by the then Conservative Government is to be persisted in, at the present time, by another Conservative Administration? I say, without fear of contradiction, that the action of the Government in this matter is a scandal and a disgrace. You have the means of classifying, in an easy and facile manner, what are known as political offences, as against those that are non-political; and, consequently, there can be no justification, from the historical aspect of the case, of the treatment to which you are subjecting Mr. O'Brien. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite, seeing that he has now returned to his place, what is the object of this treatment? What rational purpose can it be expected to serve? Does the Chief Secretary suppose that Mr. O'Brien, when out of prison, will be more loyal, or that he will, in the smallest degree, be intimidated, by the punishment he will have undergone, from continuing the course he has, in my opinion, the greatest justification for pursuing? There is not a man sitting here among the Irish Members who is at all likely to be intimidated, by the gross and barbarous punishment accorded to Mr. O'Brien, from adopting the same line of conduct as has been followed by that hon. Gentleman. Does the Chief Secretary suppose that Mr. O'Brien's treatment will be likely to impress the Irish people generally with a sense of fear; or, on the other hand, that it will in any way tend to conciliate them in their attitude towards the present Government? If you look through the daily papers—even the now much discredited *Times* newspaper—you will find a record presented day by day of the enthusiasm and devotion of the Irish people, who have been worked up almost to fever heat by reason of the gross treatment dealt out to the champions of their cause; and I say, unhesitatingly, that there can be no surer way of continuing and intensifying the existing agitation than the course Her Majesty's Government are at present pursuing. I may also say that, even on the Ministerial side of the House, there are a large number of the Government followers who disapprove of their policy in this respect, and from whom, in private converse, one learns that they believe the Government to be now committing a great tacti-

cal error. We, who have nothing to do with their tactical error, say to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he is carrying out a course of policy which is entirely obsolete and out of harmony and sympathy with the dictates of modern statesmanship. I freely admit that there may have been exaggerations on our side and also indiscretions, and I further freely admit that the right hon. Gentleman has made the best use of them he could. When, however, the right hon. Gentleman alludes to the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy) as having used somewhat indiscreet language towards a magistrate before whom he appeared as counsel for Mr. O'Brien, I ask him, as an English lawyer, can he bring himself to conceive a case in which an English magistrate would be found arguing and recriminating with a counsel as to whether he ought to call a man a colonel or not? The absurdity and idiocy and indecency of the proceeding go far to justify, or, at any rate, to excuse the retort made by the hon. Member for Longford. With regard to what has been said with reference to the action of County Court Judges in Ireland, I may state that I have had the honour of conversing with an English judge, not at all in sympathy with Home Rule, or what I may call the tactics of the Irish Party, and he told me that it was contrary to the elementary principles of justice that a man's imprisonment should be increased on appeal. I say that the policy pursued by the Government is a policy which shocks the consciences of the people. It is all very well to punish offences, but when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary admits they are political offences, and that the men of whom he speaks are actuated by the highest motives in doing what they have done——

MR. BALFOUR: I did not say so.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: The right hon. Gentleman stated that he believed they acted from conscientious motives; and, if conscientious motives are not the highest motives, I am at a loss to understand what else they can be.

MR. BALFOUR: I do not think I ever committed myself to any expression of opinion as to conscientious motives. I spoke of political motives.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: At any rate, I would ask, is it not a gross outrage on the common sense of the House to suggest that Mr. O'Brien and other Irish Members are not actuated by conscientious motives; and, if the right hon. Gentleman conceives that they have been actuated by conscientious motives, I would recommend him to read what has been written by his predecessors in England—men holding a similar office to that which he now fills with regard to Ireland. Let him read what was written by the Marquess of Normanby, and by other men holding a similar post, who, in giving directions to the Justices having the administration of prisons, insisted that the greatest tenderness and consideration should be exercised towards all political prisoners. We do not quarrel with the fact that punishment is awarded for political offences; but we do quarrel with the unnecessary degradation that is inflicted on political prisoners by Her Majesty's Government. We say that, in our opinion, it is intolerable that a man like Mr. O'Brien should be ruthlessly assaulted by prison warders, and compelled to submit to the injury and humiliation to which he was subjected; and, in conclusion, I warn the right hon. Gentleman that the course he is pursuing is one that can only end in absolute and complete disaster to the Government. I give him this warning, coming, as I now do, from addressing a public meeting, and bearing in mind the sympathetic English cheers raised by the people there assembled when I told them how Mr. O'Brien has been treated—cheers that were a monition to me that the time will arrive, be it soon or late, which will undoubtedly bring forth this result, that Her Majesty's present Government will be ejected from office by an overwhelming majority of the people.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN: Sir, those who have been present during the early hours of the debate may in some respects consider themselves remarkably fortunate, because they have been able to see the Irish difficulty in a nut-shell. Any one who witnessed the duel between the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) and the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) must have had a very shrewd idea of the difficulties of Ireland. On one

side of the House we have had the Member for North Armagh giving vent to a series of propositions incredibly insulting to the great majority of his fellow-countrymen. He said that, if their chosen Representatives got into gaol, he should never let them out, and that he would not line the ditches of Ireland because he would keep them to throw his political opponents into. He also said that the great advantage of the Crimes Act was that it was permanent. It is significant to observe that that sentiment did not elicit a single cheer from the crowded benches round him, although his friends are only too ready to laugh and cheer when they see an opportunity. I think that what would throw the greatest light on the difficulties of Ireland is the nature of the hon. Member's jeers and sneers at Mr. O'Brien. I saw, when looking up to the Gallery, Lord Spencer watching the proceedings with some interest. I could not but wonder what Lord Spencer would have thought, when he was responsible for the destinies of Ireland, if he had heard one of his leading supporters talking in the same tone of levity of the sufferings which had been inflicted upon one of the Representatives of the country he had to govern. When the hon. and gallant Gentleman sat down, the crowded benches on the opposite side at once emptied, and only one Party remained to hear an Irish Member who was second scarcely to any of his colleagues in eloquence, and certainly second to no Irish or English Member in his power of crowding important facts into the compass of a speech. Hon. Members opposite refuse the Representatives of Ireland any other place in which they may express their views about the government of their own country; and, when they rise to express those views here, they will not stay to hear them. We have been told by the greatest of American statesmen that the government we should aim at is the government of the people by the people and for the people; but the present is the government of the majority through the minority for the minority. I wish, however, to refer to the speech of the Chief Secretary last night—a speech made at a great crisis in the history of the nation he has to govern. That speech put before the House the full views, I presume, and the full policy of the Government, and showed Ireland what she has to expect in the present and what hope she has for the future. I congratulate the House on having got rid of the line of argument which many of us have had to pursue during the last two years. There is an end from the mouth of the Chief Secretary of defending his policy by quoting similar, or nearly similar, actions of former Governments; and with twenty-five Irish Members in prison, or recently come out of prison, or on their way to prison, not as first-class misdemeanants, but as common criminals, I think these references to any former Government might well be a thing of the past. The right hon. Gentleman's speech was not devoid of personalities, and what it wanted in *tu quoques* he made up in charges of inaccuracy. With what grace did those charges come from a Minister who had just had the dressing which the right hon. Gentleman has received from the Member for East Mayo! The Chief Secretary began his speech with a well-known rhetorical device. He said—

> "You put up your Leader on Irish questions to state the indictment against the Government. Then the Chief Secretary, as the man principally implicated, follows; but you wait to make your charges until he has sat down, and when he has no power of reply."

I think that was a very undeserved charge. From the first word to the last the noble and eloquent speech of my right hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley) was packed close with the most damning facts, placed in the very clearest light, and spoken without the slightest circumlocution. The main point of the Chief Secretary's speech turned on the question of his prisoners. The circumstances of the arrests has varied, but there is one thing common to all. They have always been carried out so that they might give as great a shock as possible to the greatest amount of sentiment and feeling. If a place could be found where an Irish Member has endeared himself to the community or distinguished himself by political action, that has been the place chosen for his arrest. One hon. Member (Mr. Kilbride) had domesticated himself at Leicester, and had many friends there. It was at Leicester he was arrested. The Member for South Galway came to Govan and

made his mark, and he was arrested almost in sight and hearing of the people with whom he had influence. Mr. O'Brien was arrested at Manchester, and Mr. Carew at the house of a candidate whose election he had come to assist. The Chief Secretary claimed that the Government are not responsible for the circumstances of these arrests. The Government are responsible to the House of Commons; and the Government deliberately encouraged the police in this sense of public duty which was so severely commented on by the *Northern Whig*. Not content in the earlier part of last Session with dogging the precincts of the House of Commons and arresting sometimes the right, sometimes the wrong, Member at the door, an Irish constable at last presented a summons within the precincts of the House itself. A Committee of the House was appointed to consider the question, and they found that a breach of privilege had been committed. [An hon. MEMBER: An idiotic Committee.] No, it was not an idiotic Committee; it was an extremely good Committee; it had, I believe, a majority of supporters of the Government upon it; and it presented a Report to the effect that the administration had been lax. But the Government used its majority on both sides of the House to insist that that Report should not be adopted, and by that course they sanctioned this outrageous conduct on the part of the police, and as much as in them lay encouraged them to the still greater outbursts of offensiveness in which they had recently been indulging. In the case of the arrest of Members of Parliament care seems to have been taken to give offence to political feeling, and in the case of priests still more care seems to have been taken to give offence to religious feeling. On this point the right hon. Gentleman made the nearest approach to an admission that I have ever heard him make. The right hon. Gentleman said, with regard to that melancholy and tragic affair at Gweedore, that unquestionably there had been an error of judgment committed, an error of strategy, an error of tactics. But that was by no means the view of the *Northern Whig*, and there it is that the right hon. Gentleman has seriously misread the opinion of by far the ablest of his supporters in Ireland. That journal stated that, with a little delay, the arrest might have been made in a much easier and quieter manner, and if it had been made in a quieter manner this terrible calamity would not have occurred. What does the Irish Correspondent of the *Times*, describing the state of Gweedore at this moment, say?—

> "Twenty persons, including the Rev. James M'Fadden and four women, are now in custody charged with the murder of District Inspector Martin. The police are looking for numbers of others believed to be concerned in the deed, and almost nightly houses are searched in which some are suspected of being concealed. The parish is practically depopulated; very many of Father M'Fadden's parishioners who attended Mass on the fatal Sunday morning have left the district, if not the country."

I was much struck by an observation which fell from the hon. Member for East Mayo about the state in which the Government found Donegal, and the state in which they would leave it. When I was connected with the government of Ireland we used to point to Donegal as a portion of the country—not owing to any merit of ours, but owing to the character of the people and its long history—where, though the people were very poor, there was no disturbance or disaffection whatever. In the course of my connection with Donegal the only difficulty which I can recall is a trumpery question of a Protestant Board of Guardians which would not appoint a teacher to the Catholic children in the workhouse; but of serious crime there was none. But now what is the state of this great district? The *Times* says it is depopulated. That is the pacification of Ireland according to the notion of the Government—*solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant*. This is the state of things in Gweedore. From the ghastly murder itself down to the last drop of retribution which will be eventually exacted, all is due to the fact that a priest has been arrested coming away from saying Mass. It is not merely a mistake of strategy or tactics; it is worse. But, strange to say, the Government have not profited by that lesson, for in the *Times* I observe that another priest on his way to Gweedore after saying Mass was arrested. What are we to think of a Government, after such a lesson as that, which could repeat such a blunder?

When the Government have got those Gentlemen in prison, what is their treatment? Are the Government responsible for their treatment? The Chief Secretary says that the Prisons Board bear precisely the same relation to the Lord Lieutenant, and the Chief Secretary who advises him, as the Prisons Board in England bear to the Home Secretary. He says that the management of the prisoners was not in the Department of the Chief Secretary. Well, then, in whose Department is it? When Mr. Timothy Harrington was in prison for a speech in 1883, representations were made in the House to the Chief Secretary, and through him to the Lord Lieutenant; and the Lord Lieutenant mitigated and humanized the treatment of Mr. Harrington, and not only of Mr. Harrington, but of all other Irishmen who had been placed in prison for speeches and writings. Why did not hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who hold this theory that the Chief Secretary is not responsible for prisoners make that objection when the case was dealt with by the then Chief Secretary. Parliament has never, admitted and will never admit that there is not full Ministerial responsibility for the treatment of prisoners. The right hon. Gentleman suggests that three reasons have been given why these prisoners should not be dealt with as ordinary prisoners. The first, he says, is that those hon. Members were eloquent. It is true that I have praised Mr. O'Brien's eloquence in the country. Anyone who has listened to Mr. O'Brien's speeches on Ireland in this House, and especially anyone who listened to or read the remarkable speech before the Special Commission, in which that hon. Member produced such an effect on the Court that he entirely altered the views which had up to that time been adopted, will agree with me as to that hon. Member's eloquence; and I now say thatany one who heard or read that speech and has acquainted himself with the accounts of Mr. O'Brien's treatment in prison would be deeply shocked. I said that in the country, and I say it now. The right hon. Gentleman was not ashamed to raise a cheer from his supporters by saying that Mr. O'Brien had attacked me in former days. It is a very old story. Wherever I went to speak in the country I always found the statement placarded over the walls, and I always received the same story in an anonymous letter of welcome. I will tell you who started it. It was the work of the Loyal and Patriotic Association, and it was worthy of the inspiration of their secretary. But the idea that because of anything which a political opponent said or wrote of me in old days, I should rejoice to see him insulted in prison, and the still more preposterous idea that on account of that I should alter my views on the question of the treatment of political prisoners, or the still greater issues between Ireland and Great Britain, shows what sort of men they are who entertain such ideas. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on with the next argument that a man who has been delicately brought up suffers more than other prisoners, and, finally, he went on with our principal argument that these offences were political and not strictly criminal offences. The right hon. Gentleman ran through the scale of what he called political crime, and asked whether we can stop short of the midnight assassin and the dynamiter. That was a pretty exercise of the intellect; but if the practical conclusion at which the right hon. Gentleman arrived was that a man who had published the proceedings of a proclaimed branch of the National League was as black a criminal as the man who cut a throat, all I can say is that that might be a clever mode of chopping logic, but it is quite unworthy of a man who undertakes to govern, and govern justly, kindly, and considerately, a great nation. It is not because they are eloquentor because they are delicate that we resent and regret the treatment of Irish Members of Parliament, but because the Government has broken through the great and cardinal principle of treating political prisoners differently from other prisoners, and therefore they are obliged to punish as common criminals eminent public men, and to inflict on men who have been delicately brought up punishment altogether out of proportion to their offences. The real fact is that we have no feeling about the rich and the poor, or Members of Parliament and non-official people. What we object to is to punish men

who commit political crime as ordinary criminals, whether they are rich or poor. On the 3rd of May, 1867, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Birmingham presented a petition to this House in regard to the treatment of Irish prisoners. He was very much interrupted by hon. Members who sat opposite, but he got the essence of his statement out. The petition which he read asked that prisoners suffering as Fenians or for a political offence should not be confined in common with prisoners suffering for offences against the ordinary law, and it also prayed that in the punishments awarded to them there might be none of a degrading nature, as such punishments were inapplicable to men whose offence was free from dishonour. Mr. Bright said that in the general spirit of that petition he entirely agreed. Now, what is the crime which has been most heavily punished recently under the Crimes Act? Mr. E. Harrington is in prison on hard labour for six months. That is double the amount of punishment inflicted in many cases by London magistrates on persons in a confidential position who have stolen considerable sums of money. Mr. E. Harrington received that severe sentence because he published in a newspaper a speech which the Court pronounced to be innocent—that is to say, a speech in which the law has no concern. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary says that is a grossly inaccurate statement. Now, what are the facts? Three charges were preferred against Mr. Harrington—namely, publishing a report of a meeting of the Tralee National League, attending the same meeting of the League, and inciting to the adoption of the Plan of Campaign. The prosecuting counsel said he proposed to proceed with each charge separately and to tender evidence on each. He eventtually withdrew the charge of taking part in the meeting, and then went on to the third charge—that of inciting persons to take part in the Plan of Campaign. Evidence was taken, and Mr. Roche in giving the decision said that, with reference to the last charge, they were of opinion that, though Mr. Harrington had used very strong language, the evidence that had been given was not sufficient to prove the offence, and therefore they dismissed the charge; but with regard to the charge of publishing the report of the meeting, that was a very serious matter indeed, and they gave him six months' hard labour. That was the sort of offence for which Mr. Harrington received the punishment awarded to the vilest criminals. It is said that our sympathy is only given to Members of Parliament. I will take one case to prove that is not so. At Milltown Malbay, Father White, the parish priest, having observed that very serious evils occurred from the publichouses being open at times of political excitement, advised and requested the publicans to close their houses during a certain trial. Whether that advice was legal or not it was very wise, and I wish that the Legislature had the same good sense as Father White in closing public houses during a contested election. The police, however, got wind of it, and long before, for they were able to supply themselves with plenty of liquor in their barracks; but when the day came they went round to 26 publichouses and asked for liquor at each for the express purpose of punishing and oppressing the people. Twenty-one publicans were summoned, for refusing to sell liquor. There was no talk of conspiracy. At the very utmost it was their obedience to their pastor, who deserved their obedience. Those 21 men were convicted of conspiracy, and sentenced to hard labour for a month. They were told that if they would promise never to do it again the sentence would be remitted; but 11 refused, as Irishmen under the circumstances always will refuse, to give such a pledge, and they were sent to prison. They were not tenderly nurtured people, but were political prisoners as much as any Member of Parliament. Now I come to another class of case—that of men who are punished for recommending tenants to take part in the Plan of Campaign, or for in some way or other giving advice with regard to the rent. I will take one of the most marked of those cases, that of Mr. Patrick O'Brien, who, I am glad to see, has returned to the House of Commons. Mr. O'Brien was tried on the 27th January, and was sentenced to four months' imprisonment for interfering in the question of rent between the landlord and tenant. Anyone would have thought that that punishment was

enough, but the Government did not think so. Since that Mr. O'Brien had not only made speeches about the payment of rent, but he had made a speech upon a very much more serious question; he had said to the tenants on a certain estate who were giving 17 years' purchase for their farms that they were giving more than it was their interest to give. The advice was given in moderate language, and it is very likely it was good advice. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) has told us—he knows best with what accuracy—that in many cases the landlord's fee simple was worth a great deal less than the tenant's interest. Say it is five or six years less, these tenants were actually giving 40 years' purchase for their farms. The Government indicted Mr. P. O'Brien on two counts; they charged him with taking part in a conspiracy to compel tenants not to fulfil their legal obligation to pay rent to Mr. John Smithwick; and they likewise charged him with advising the tenants not to deal with Lord Monck in purchasing the land. The Government were exceedingly anxious to get convictions. A speech of very great power and ability was made at the trial by Mr. Leamy, now a Member of the House, on the extraordinary injustice of allowing an agent to use his influence to put pressure on tenants to induce them to purchase, and of punishing a Member of Parliament for simply advising them not to pay more than the farms were worth. But this was not the opinion of the Government, and they did their very best to press the charge. I do not know what the Resident Magistrates thought about it, because they preferred to punish Patrick O'Brien on the ground that he had advised tenants not to pay rent, the evidence being that he had drunk off a glass of water and had said "Down with Smithwick." They gave him three months on this charge, making in all seven months, or one month more than it was evidently the intention of Parliament that anyone should receive for any one class of fault. The fact is that Mr. Patrick O'Brien received a sentence of three months on account of a speech in which there was nothing new except this advice to the tenants not to buy land at 17 years' purchase; and he got this sentence on the top of a sentence of four months. It appears that I thought he had received the sentence for giving this advice about Lord Mock, and that I believe is the outside of any inaccuracy which in the very large number of speeches I have made on the Irish Question during the last year, and if the right hon. Gentleman, the author of the famous letter to Mr. Armitage, regards this as a serious inaccuracy, it only shows that we see our neighbours' faults through different glasses than those with which we look at our own. The right hon. Gentleman said it was the Irish Members below the Gangway who will not have conciliation in Ireland, and he especially charges the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) with being responsible for the present agitation in Ireland. The hon. Member did not deserve any such charge. It is the House that is responsible for the Plan of Campaign. What was the course taken by the hon. Member for North-East Cork? In 1886 he urged with great force that times were bad, that a bad winter was approaching, and that the only way to preserve tenants from ruin, and to remove temptations to disorder, would be to revise rents. The Government rejected his advice, a bad winter came, and all the foretold consequences followed. Next year the Government acknowledged their fault and brought in a Bill for revising rents. But it was too late, and arrears of unjust rents had been incurred. Then it was that the hon. Member gave the Government a fresh piece of good advice, for he urged them to introduce an Arrears Bill. On a poor and paltry excuse it was set aside. Irish Members, who are the representatives not only of the farmers, but also of the shopkeepers of Ireland, would not have the just debts to the shopkeepers dealt with in the same manner as the unjust debts to the landlords. Therefore the hon. Member for North-East Cork was entirely free from the charge brought against him of having opposed conciliation in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has been very free with his epithets with regard to hon. Members below the Gangway. I care very little about the epithets which the right hon. Gentleman applies to us on this bench; but if anything can do harm, it is that the Minister who is

responsible for the Government of Ireland should three times in one speech tell hon. Members below the Gangway that they are pursuing the methods and are identified with the motives of the rebels of '98, '48, and '68.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was quoting themselves.

*SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I do not know when, or whether, they described themselves so, or how it was who so described them; but I know that the description is true no longer. The right hon. Gentleman contrived to get through his speech without giving the idea that Ireland had any grievances whatever. He did not allude to the two great and standing grievances of Ireland, those grievances embodied in the last sentence of the Amendment. The first of those grievances is, that no Irishman who holds the opinions of the great majority of Irishmen can occupy a post of honourable employment or responsibility in his own country any more than if he had been an Italian in the old days holding anti-Austrian opinions in Northern Italy. Nor did the right hon. Gentleman refer to the fact that legislation on purely Irish matters is not influenced by Irishmen. Every Land Bill affecting that purely agrarian country has to pass through a co-equal House of the Legislature in which there sit many landlords and peers in sympathy with Irish landlords, but in which there is not a single representative of the Irish tenants. These are the two great and crying grievances which the right hon. Gentleman should have spoken about, and for which he should have produced his remedy. Whether he calls them rebels, or they call themselves rebels, or not, I say that these gentlemen, so far from deserving the name, have now determined to remove these grievances by Constitutional and Parliamentary methods. They have interested themselves in the politics and the affairs and the reforms, and the deeper and higher interests of England, Scotland, and Wales, and we in return interest ourselves deeply in their claims and aspirations. And in order to show that they shall not look in vain to Parliamentary methods for redress for these two great grievances, which I defy the Minister who follows me to prove are not great and crying grievances, let us all, everyone, who wish well to England, land, Ireland and Scotland, vote for the Amendment of my right hon. Friend.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE): Mr. Speaker, I can well understand the disappointment of the right hon. Gentleman at the comparatively small attendance in different quarters of the House, as there is no section of the House with which on this subject at one time or the other he has not agreed. The right hon. Gentleman says that the principles laid down in 1867 ought not, after the lapse of 22 years, to be departed from. I think I may fairly ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the same rule is to apply to the principles laid down two or two and a half years ago, when "Lord Spencer and I," as the right hon. Gentleman is very fond of saying governed Ireland? I remember very well that in the course of administering that Coercion Act which was described by the Nationalist Party as the embodiment of all the worst faults of all the ninety-four Coercion Acts the right hon. Gentleman was attacked with a violence and with a bitter spirit far exceeding anything which is applied to the present Government, and when "Lord Spencer and I" were governing Ireland I remember very well that the Administration was attacked in a way which we who then sat opposite were certainly not prepared to endorse. The administration of "Lord Spencer and I," although much attacked, was, in our opinion, to a very considerable extent, successful, and it

had the inestimable advantage over the present Administration, that it enjoyed the support of the Opposition who desired to see law and order maintained in Ireland. When "Lord Spencer and I" were governing Ireland the boycotting of land-grabbers was emphatically condemned. Incitements to crime caused by speeches made in disturbed districts of Ireland were put before the country as an offence which deserved punishment, and which it was the duty of the Government to endeavour to punish. Now that "Lord Spencer and I" sit upon the opposite benches, these offences, then so emphatically condemned, are the subjects for excuse, if not for praise. I cannot help thinking that the front Opposition Bench throughout the debate of the last two or three days had not presented a very edifying spectacle, because whenever a speaker has excelled himself in condemning the principles that they have hitherto, and up to a very recent period, thought to be the principles which ought to govern the Administration of Ireland, there have been cheers from the front Opposition Bench, led by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt), who was formerly the Home Secretary of this country. No one can possibly doubt that if the dream of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite should ever be realized, if Home Rule as they interpret it should be given to Ireland at any future period, those laws which even in that Utopian possibility would be essential for the protection of the weak against the strong, and to insure that liberty should not degenerate into licence, and that justice should not be prostituted and degraded in the manner it sometimes is, will, I confess, become almost hopelessly impossible to enforce. Now, we are glad to be really face to face with the real charge brought against us. We heard a great deal during the Recess about the unconstitutional methods of the Government; we heard of barbarities in Ireland such as never existed in Italian prisons in the time of King Bomba; we heard of the attempts made by the Chief Secretary, and therefore, of course, by the Government, to murder prisoners; and, last of all, we heard it deliberately insinuated that the wish of my right hon. Friend was to inflict personal suffering upon his political opponents. I did not, however, hear much about these charges in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, and why? The right hon. Gentleman did make one of those charges in the country, but after listening carefully to his speech I came to the deliberate conclusion that he had not brought it in the House because the evidence will not support it.

MR. J. MORLEY: May I explain? I did charge the Government with resorting to an unconstitutional method of the grossest kind in reference to the appointment of the Special Commission; but it was impossible for me, in the present state of matters, to discuss the subject.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: That is entirely foreign to the point, but let me deal with it. A proposal was brought in by the Government for the establishment of a Special Commission to inquire into certain charges and allegations against certain Irish Members. Did the right hon. Gentleman vote against the proposal? No, Sir. Neither the right hon. Gentleman nor any of his Friends on that side of the House had the courage to come forward in opposition to the Commission, or to go into the Lobby against it. The right hon Gentleman, therefore, need not talk about unconstitutional methods. We heard nothing of such an argument at the time, and it is not reasonable to bring it forward now. But what other unconstitutional methods does he charge against the Government? I heard a good deal in the country

about our barbarous method of treating prisoners. Where did the right hon. Gentleman in his speech bring forward any instance of that? I heard no attempt on his part to justify any one of those propositions which have been put before ignorant audiences in the country. But the charges against the Government have been repeated in a most violent way, and sometimes in offensive language by the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon) to-night: and although, of course, I am somewhat imperfectly acquainted with all the details of the cases brought forward, I think I am entitled to select a certain number of cases, and if I can show that they are inaccurate they will serve as samples of the general inaccuracy of the charges. I cannot help thinking that if the microscopical examination of the conduct of the Government during the past three or four months has only produced the old, well-worn, and oft-refuted charges, the Government may congratulate themselves that they have been able to carry out what has been a most difficult policy without infringing the Constitution of the country. I will not dwell upon what the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has said with regard to the mode in which some of the prisoners have been arrested, except to remark that the obvious reason why they have been arrested in particular places was because they have fled from justice. Warrants were out against the prisoners, and if they were executed under circumstances which gave some inconvenience, it was almost entirely due to the action of those hon. Members who desired to evade the execution of the warrants. Then, Sir, I will put aside the case of Father M'Fadden, to which I am sorry reference has been made, because it is under trial. I am quite aware that the first reference was not made on the opposite side of the House; but I am sure the House generally will be sorry that any such charge has been made as was made from the benches below the Gangway opposite—namely, the charge of murder, or judicial murder, against the Government. I would rather come to a case that has excited a good deal of interest in the country—I mean the case of Mr. O'Brien. Now, the charge against the Government is that they have treated him with barbarity in prison. There are grave charges brought against my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary. First of all, he was charged with attempting to murder Mr. O'Brien; secondly, he is charged with allowing brutal and disgusting assaults to be made upon him, in order that he might afterwards have the pleasure of sneering at him; and, in the third place, he is charged with taking advantage of him by attacking him while he was in prison. With regard to the first charge, I think that when the facts are inquired into it will be found that the statement of the hon. Momber for Mayo is altogether without foundation. What are the facts of the case? When Mr. O'Brien was in prison he was asked to take off his clothes in order that he might put on prison clothes, according to prison rules. He refused to do so, and was warned by the Governor of the consequences of his refusal. When he still refused to remove his clothes the Governor ordered a warder to remove them, at the same time telling him not to use more violence than was necessary to accomplish that object. And accordingly the clothes were removed, and then, according to the statement made by the hon. Member for Mayo, Mr. O'Brien was dragged from the place where he was to a place at some distance in order that he might be weighed. According to information in my possession, the machine was brought close to the door of Mr. O'Brien's cell, and when Mr. O'Brien said that he should object to being weighed, that course was not persisted in. It had been said that Mr. O'Brien's spectacles were taken away. They were, in order that they might not be broken, and they were afterwards returned.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who says all this?

*MR. STANHOPE: When the hon. Member for Mayo makes his statement or account of Mr. O'Brien, I reply with the statement of Dr. O'Farrell, the

Prisons Board Inspector, a more independent authority than the prison doctor. He says in most emphatic terms——

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish, Mr. Speaker——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. T. M. HEALY: I rise to a point of order to ask——

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is in possession of the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: But I rise to a point of order, and to ask you a question, Sir. If the right hon. Gentleman reads from a document which is not in our possession, will he not be bound to lay it on the Table?

MR. SPEAKER: That depends entirely on the nature of the document.

*MR. E. STANHOPE continued: Dr. O'Farrell has stated that Mr. O'Brien had no complaint of any kind to make regarding his prison treatment; that he had every confidence in the skill and kindness of the prison doctor; and that if the rule depriving him of his clothing had to be insisted on he would say that no excessive violence had been used. Dr. O'Farrell also stated that Mr. O'Brien was in a boarded cell, heated to a temperature of 60 degrees, and that he was well and cheerful. So much I need say as to the treatment of Mr. O'Brien. Then I gather other complaints made. The hon. Member for East Mayo complains that the Chief Secretary attended a Liberal Unionist banquet in Dublin, and there spoke of Mr. O'Brien's refusal to be examined by the prison doctor. Well, I confess, though I am quite certain that my right hon. Friend had no desire to turn this matter into ridicule, it is hardly possible to talk of the grotesque manner in which Mr. O'Brien has on every possible occasion endeavoured to parade himself before the public—["No, no!"]—for the special benefit of the people of this country, impossible to make any statement in regard to it without exciting some ridicule. What my right hon. Friend did was to read at the banquet from the *Freeman's Journal*, and that has been severely commented upon to-night. The account in the *Freeman's Journal* said the prison doctor wished Mr. O'Brien to go out into an open corridor to be examined, and that this request was naturally refused. On the authority of this statement the Chief Secretary felt entitled to say that Mr. O'Brien had refused to be examined; and when he found that the facts did not justify that statement—that Mr. O'Brien had not carried his objections so far—he took the earliest opportunity, in a letter to the newspapers, of expressing his desire to qualify his previous statement. Then objections have been taken to the letter written by the Chief Secretary to Mr. Armitage. It has been described as a deliberate attack upon a man in prison. But that letter was only written because the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle had been in various parts of the country attacking the Chief Secretary on that very point. Quotations were made from the speech of Mr. O'Brien on which he had been committed, altogether omitting the main point of the speech for which he was committed. Is it to be maintained that my right hon. Friend was not right in taking the earliest opportunity of stating to the country the real truth with regard to the charge made against him? Then with respect to the treatment of Mr. Edward Harrington. It has been referred to this evening in terms which are wholly and absolutely without foundation. Mr. Harrington has been put upon the lightest and easiest labour. There is a Report from the Governor of the gaol on the subject, which states in the most distinct terms that the prisoner's fingers were not skinned or raw, as stated by the hon. Member for East Mayo; that he was dressed in a full suit of prison clothes; and that he had flannel shirt and drawers, and also an overcoat and a blue rug. So that the statements made by the hon. Member for Mayo are absolutely without foundation.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is this from the Governor of Tralee or Tullamore Prison?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I am afraid I cannot answer that question. As I have said, I am not familiar with details.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman we quite appreciate that.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Now I come to the general charges. When hon. Members complain, as they have every right to, of prison treatment, what they really mean, disguise it how they may, is that certain classes should be treated differently from other classes. *Primâ facie* I should have thought that the unwilling instrument, the hired agent, the paid dupe, ought to be more lightly punished than the person who winked at his offence—that he was less guilty than the man urging that the crime should be committed. It would be hard that the person who had been subjected to intimidation, or who had received payment, should be treated with the full rigour of the law, and that the tempter, the inciter, the prime mover, should escape scot-free. I notice last night that it was stated that one ought to regulate the punishment administered in prison by public opinion. But the public opinion of the country holds that the punishment of persons sent to prison ought to be administered with impartiality, and, I am certain, would not approve of a distinction drawn in favour of the rich or the tempter. The hon. Member for Mayo said that the Government had made special exception in the case of persons punished for certain frauds committed in Belfast, and that they had received special comforts. That statement is unfounded; these persons have been treated like ordinary prisoners, and have not, with respect to their cells or otherwise, been treated differently.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir. I will not give way.

MR. DILLON: Allow me to rise to a point of order, and explain that I read from a newspaper a statement by Alderman Bell, who visited the prisoners.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: That statement is altogether without foundation. The argument that there should be a different treatment for men of refinement will not hold water. No doubt men of refinement suffer more from prison treatment than others. But is it not perfectly well known that the Judge or Magistrate take that into consideration in apportioning the sentence according to the circumstances of the case? I altogether deny that it would be a proper course for the Executive Government, not familiar with the circumstances, to take upon itself the proportioning punishments in prison, by making exceptional conditions for particular persons. Seeing that the hour is late I pass over some matters, and proceed to call attention to what has been admitted in the course of the debate—the undoubted improvement in the state of Ireland. Hon. Members below the Gangway all admit that there has been an improvement, and I want to know, if that is so, why the Government are not entitled to say so in Her Majesty's Speech? If hon. Members will be kind enough to look at the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, I would ask why is it necessary to move an Amendment to the paragraph which says—

> "We assure your Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that the Statutes which we have recently passed for the restoration of order and confidence in Ireland have already been attended with satisfactory results."

["No, no."] Do hon. Gentlemen desire to assure Her Majesty that they have not been attended with salutary results? The hon. Member for Mayo declared to-night that the main cause of the improvement in Ireland was the Plan of Campaign. A more unwarranted

assertion was never made in this House. It has been proved beyond the possibility of doubt that crime was greater where the Plan of Campaign existed, and, if necessary and had time permitted, I could prove it.

MR. DILLON: Not one word of truth in it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Take time; speak to-morrow.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The language of the hon. Member for Mayo is not that usually employed in this House.

MR. DILLON: With all due respect to the right hon. Gentleman and the House, I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to the proof. He says he can prove it.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The second proposition I would lay down in answer to the hon. Member is, that in those places hon. Members and those whom they have sent down have done their best to produce boycotting. That is the great crime the Government have to deal with in those places where the Plan of Campaign exists, and it has been proved that the greatest effect produced by the Crimes Act has been produced in the diminution of that crime. Has boycotting diminished or not? I can give facts which would prove that it has. Comparing boycotting 18 months ago with what it is now, it appears that the number of cases of total boycotting was then 152, and now it is nine, while the number of cases of partial boycotting was then 610 and is now 121. There cannot be a shadow of a doubt that this improvement is due to the Crimes Act. In the county of Clare the number of cases of complete boycotting 18 months ago was 56; it is now none; the number of cases of partial boycotting was then 414; it is now 46. In Limerick the number of cases of total boycotting was 18 months ago 113; it is now none; while the number of partial boycotting, which was then 225, is now five. There are also other signs of improvement. Agrarian crime is less than it has been in any period for ten years past; more farms from which persons have been evicted have been let to tenants; intimidation, I am sorry to say, still exists; but if right hon. Gentlemen opposite will use their exertions in discouraging boycotting, before long farms from which persons have been evicted will be let in still greater numbers. It is also much more difficult than before to create agitation in Ireland. I know that it can still be created by sensational speeches and articles in newspapers; but it is much more difficult to create it than it was a short time ago. The relations between landlord and tenant are improving, and between the police and the people, save in some districts where, owing to the action of hon. Gentlemen, the Plan of Campaign prevails. All these things, I say, point conclusively to the fact that there is a greatly improved condition of affairs in Ireland. As the result of Her Majesty's Government's policy, and of the administration of my right hon. Friend, we see those hopeful signs, and we look forward to a still further improved condition of affairs in Ireland. We know our work is not done. We entered upon this long and arduous contest with full knowledge of the difficulties to be encountered before we could completely succeed in restoring peace, in putting down an unlawful conspiracy to prevent the natural fruits of beneficent legislation, and in developing the resources of Ireland. Still, we have full confidence in our policy, carried out as it is by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary, and supported by all his Colleagues in the Ministry, as the only means of securing peace and prosperity to that unhappy country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." (*Mr. Channing.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Since we have had this unfortunate

tatement, I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will take the House fully into his confidence, and let us have it in its entirety. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman where he got it, and I am instructed that Mr. O'Brien can contradict it practically on every point. I appeal to you, Sir, and respectfully submit that it would be in accordance with precedent, a Minister having quoted from it, that this Official Report should be laid before the House.

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: Everybody can have ready access to it. It has already been published in the Press.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: But I venture to submit that is not an answer to my question. There is a well-defined practice in regard to documents quoted by a Minister, and it would be in accordance with that to give us the whole of the document from which a part was quoted.

Mr. SPEAKER: Such documents are, as a general rule, laid before the House, that Members generally may have ready access to such. The right hon. Gentleman, however, says the document has been already published, and no doubt he will state the date and say where.

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: Every word I quoted appeared in the newspapers of February 11th, in the present year.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Still, that is not an answer. I never saw the publication; never heard of it. My point is this, that the right hon. Gentleman should lay a copy of the whole of the document on the Table.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Are we to understand the right hon. Gentleman was quoting from a newspaper or from the Report itself?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: I quoted from a paper of February 11th part of a letter written by the Chief Secretary.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think my hon. and learned Friend is entitled to a more specific reply. The point raised has not been dealt with at all. The right hon. Gentleman has quoted an official document, the Report of a prison official. He says a certain portion appeared in the Press, but is not my hon. and learned Friend right in claiming that the House is entitled to have the full document?

Mr. SPEAKER: The whole of the document in question referring to the point in question ought to be laid before the House.

Debate further adjourned till To-morrow.

MOTIONS.

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to control the arrangements for the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, in the department of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House."—(*Mr. Herbert.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I do not oppose the Motion. Though we do not gather so much from the accounts, I understand that the larger part of the £1,000 granted annually by the House is devoted by the Committee to service. I would suggest that the Report of the Committee should be more precise in details, for if Members generally knew that we had to pay so much for attendance, I am sure there would be general dissatisfaction. The service for any part of the House should find its place in the Estimates.

Motion agreed to.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Mr. A. H. Acland, Mr. Agg-Gardner, Mr. H. T. Anstruther, Mr. Biggar, Mr. William Corbet, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Flower, General Goldsworthy, Colonel Hamilton, Colonel Hambro, Mr. Herbert, Viscount Lewis-

ham, Mr. Marjoribanks, Colonel Malcolm, and Mr. Sheil.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Herbert.*)

DEACONS (CHURCH OF ENGLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sydney Gedge, Bill to amend the law relating to Deacons of the Church of England, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Sydney Gedge, Viscount Folkestone, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Samuel Hoare, and Mr. Mac Innes.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 129.]

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (EXTENSION TO WOMEN) (NO. 2.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Walter M'Laren, Bill to extend the Parliamentary Franchise to Women, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Walter M'Laren, Mr. Woodall, Dr. Cameron, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Howorth, Mr. Arthur Williams, Captain Edwards-Heathcote, and Mr. Evans.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 130.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

QUESTION.

—o—

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—THE CASE OF MR. PIGOTT.

MR. FORREST FULTON (West Ham, N.): I desire to ask the Home Secretary whether he can now explain the delay which is alleged to have taken place on the part of the police in dealing with the warrant for the arrest of Mr. R. Pigott? I understand that the warrant was issued early in the day by the Special Commission.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): Yes, Mr. Speaker; I am able to state that there was no delay whatever on the part of the police. Since I was questioned on the subject by the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), I have received information that the Bench warrant issued this morning by the Commission Court was not brought to Scotland Yard till a quarter past 6 by a person in the employment of Messrs. Lewis and Lewis. It was not, therefore, until that hour that the police could possibly take any steps for the arrest of Mr. Pigott. Immediately the warrant was received, every step that was possible was taken by telegraphing to the ports and by employing persons to watch at all railway stations.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): As this question has been raised, evidently by arrangement, I beg leave to remind the House that my first question was whether any kind of surveillance had existed with regard to the *Times* witnesses, and undoubtedly it had; and my question to the Government was why, that being so, the police let Mr. Pigott slip out of their fingers? Now, an illusory question is put by the hon. and learned Member with regard to the execution of the warrant. That point was not raised at all by me. If the Government are now taking the point that the warrant was not brought to Scotland Yard till 6 o'clock, I respectfully submit to them, in the interests of justice, that as hundreds of officials were in the neighbourhood of the Court they must have known at 12 o'clock, or at 1 o'clock at the latest, that the warrant was issued, and it was their duty to see that the closure, with which we are familiar in this House, was put upon the ports of the kingdom. But that was not my complaint or allegation at all. My complaint is, that you had delegated two sergeants of the Royal Irish Constabulary to look after Pigott —Sergeants Fawcett and Gallagher— and that precious consignment having been committed to their keeping, and they having got him, why did they not keep him? Therefore, the point of my observation remains—namely, that the Irish Government, having paid two police sergeants to watch Mr. Pigott, when the critical hour of 6 o'clock (at which the Continental train leaves Charing Cross) arrived, those two

sergeants found it convenient to shut their eyes to the absence of Mr. Pigott. A more convenient opportunity will be taken to find how it was that "our old friend Walter" had put at his disposal those two sergeants to guard his precious charge Pigott, and why, when it became suitable, "our old friend Walter" allowed Pigott to escape.

MR. MATTHEWS: I must correct the hon. Gentleman a little. His questions, addressed to me this afternoon with less courtesy than is usual even with him, implied that I was acting in collusion with Mr. Richard Pigott, and had allowed him to escape. I replied that no knowledge or information of Mr. Pigott's escape had reached me. That has been explained by the fact that Scotland Yard, through which alone I could get information, and which has nothing to do with the Irish police, and which alone has authority to execute Bench warrants issued in England, did not obtain information from Messrs. Lewis and Lewis, who had charge of this Bench warrant, until 6 o'clock in the evening. It is, therefore, not surprising that I should have had no information, and I should have expected from the hon. Member some sort of apology for the insinuations he addressed to me about 4 o'clock this afternoon.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask whether, in the 12 hours which have elapsed since the Bench warrant was issued, and in the six hours which have elapsed since it was in the hands of Scotland Yard, any information has been received as to Pigott's escape or capture? I also ask whether Dr. Maguire, the Professor of Moral Philosophy at Dublin, was found dead in his bed in London this evening; and, if so, whether the police have any information as to the cause of death, and whether a coroner's inquest will be held?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information with regard to such a death, nor any Report as to the action of the police.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): May I ask whether steps have been taken by the police to arrest or ascertain Mr. Pigott's whereabouts?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Member must know that to disobey a subpœna is not a criminal offence, and the police cannot arrest a person who does not obey his subpœna except on a Bench warrant.

MR. CHANCE: I said, "whether steps have been taken to ascertain Mr. Pigott's whereabouts."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): As to the Report of Dr. O'Farrell which the hon. Member for Longford presses for, it is important that, if laid on the Table at all, it should be so laid at once; therefore, if the Motion for Adjournment is withdrawn, I will make the necessary Motion for the production of the Report.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Motion be, by leave, withdrawn," put, and agreed to.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If there are other Reports on the same subject they also should be produced.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. Friend (Mr. Stanhope) has undoubtedly laid himself open to have the particular Report quoted by him called for, and it has accordingly been ordered by the Speaker to have it placed on the Table of the House, but I think the practice in regard to these confidential Reports an objectionable one, and will not do anything to extend it.

Copy *ordered*, "of Dr. O'Farrell's Report as to Mr. William O'Brien, M.P."—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to be laid upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 40.]

Question put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 5.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 7.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 27th February, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—DISAPPEARANCE OF MR. PIGOTT.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the Home Secretary whether there is any truth in the report that Richard Pigott has been apprehended? Secondly, I wish to ask whether there is to be a Coroner's inquest respecting the death of Dr. Maguire, as to which suspicions have been suggested; and, thirdly, whether steps will be taken to secure possession of the deceased gentleman's papers? I wish further to ask, in reference to a statement made before the Special Commission this morning by Sir Charles Russell, that the man Houston has been involved in a foul conspiracy, whether any steps will be taken to insure that he shall not leave the country?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): With regard to Mr. Pigott, there is no truth in the report that he has been apprehended. Every possible step has been taken by the Metropolitan Police in the matter since the issue of the Bench warrant (and earlier on the perjury warrant) for his apprehension, which reached Scotland Yard at a quarter-past 6 o'clock yesterday afternoon in a sealed envelope from Messrs. Lewis and Lewis. Immediately all the ports and foreign stations were telegraphed to with instructions to detain Pigott. If he passed through a foreign station, of course it would only be necessary to send information as to his arrival. Special inquiries were also made at all the London hotels, and last night Pigott's name and description were circulated in what is called "Information" to all stations of the Metropolitan Police, the consequence of which was that every constable on any beat had instructions to detain Pigott. I do not know that any other steps could have been taken, but they have, as yet, all resulted in nothing. Pigott has not been seen, and no information has been obtained respecting him within the district of the Metropolitan Police. With regard to Dr. Maguire, my information is that he died yesterday morning of inflammation of the windpipe. A consultation of doctors was held on Monday, and they contemplated the operation of tracheotomy, but in consequence of his condition, and the disease from which he was suffering, it was not considered safe to perform that operation. He sank under the disease in the course of yesterday morning, and, so far as my information reaches, there is no reason whatever why the Coroner should hold an inquiry, as the death was purely due to natural causes. Of course, if any suspicious circumstances arise, no doubt the Coroner of the district will hold an inquest. With regard to what the hon. Gentleman has suggested to me about taking precautions as to any papers Dr. Maguire may have had, and also with respect to Mr. Houston, I have no information at present before me that would justify me in taking any steps of that kind, but I can assure the hon. Gentleman that the matter will not escape my attention, and that I will

neglect no precautious that may seem necessary.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask, with regard to Mr. Houston, whether the right hon. Gentleman will be good enough to bear in mind the statement made before the Special Commission that certain letters of Houston, said to have been destroyed, are in the possession of Pigott?

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I wish to ask the Home Secretary, with reference to the Questions I put to the right hon. Gentleman yesterday, if he has had any opportunity of learning whether the persons whom Pigott, on his examination before the Commission, swore were with him for his protection were constables; and, if so, whether they were constables of the Metropolitan Police, and whether he has any information as to what other force they belong to; also, if they were constables, whether it was their duty to report when Pigott disappeared, and whether they, in fact, made any report, and, if so, to whom?

MR. MATTHEWS: Mr. Pigott was neither watched nor protected by any constables whatever belonging to the Metropolitan Police Force. I cannot give the hon. Member information as to any other persons whose names have been mentioned in the course of these proceedings. If Mr. Pigott has been under police supervision by constables of the Metropolitan Police, of course it would be their duty to make a Report.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is it within the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman that it would be possible for constables of any other force to be protecting Mr. Pigott within the Metropolitan Police District?

MR. MATTHEWS: I should say, certainly, no. The constables of any other force whatever have no jurisdiction to act as constables within the Metropolitan District.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.): Owing to the fact that Dr. Maguire may have got poison administered to him, might it not be well to hold a post-mortem examination?

No answer was returned, the Home Secretary having temporarily left the House.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I wish, in the absence of the Home Secretary, to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he is not aware that two members of the Irish Constabulary, in the course of yesterday, swore, in the Commission Court, that they were protecting this person Pigott; and whether they have made any Report?

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): That is a Question which obviously requires consideration, and I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give notice of it.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Are the Government not aware that these two men have been over here for the last fortnight? How comes it that members of the Royal Irish Constabulary can be absent from their stations in Ireland without the Government knowing it? I would ask further, if it is the fact that these officers are not under the control of Her Majesty's Government, why they are in London; and how it is that the Government have been able, on previous occasions, with regard to Members of this House, to suspend the action of warrants issued to members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, unless they can control the action of these men whilst they are in London?

MR. MADDEN: I have no special knowledge of the matters of fact which are the foundation of the Question of the hon. and learned Member, but if he puts the Question on the paper I will make inquiries.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask the Under Secretary whether it is possible for constables of the Irish Constabulary to do duty in London without the knowledge of the Home Office, when the right hon. Gentleman has stated that they have no jurisdiction?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): I cannot add anything to the answers which my right hon. Friend gave. I think further notice should be given.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask whether a letter has been received in Court this morning from Pigott, written from an hotel in Paris; and whether, in view of that fact, the Government are now in communication with the authorities in Paris with regard to this man?

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: My right hon. Friend has said that every step has been taken that can be taken in the matter.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask whether the warrants which have been issued will enable the arrest of Pigott to be made in Paris?

DR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.): Is it not the fact that members of the Irish Constabulary do duty in London, Liverpool, and other large centres in England; and, if so, by what authority do they act?

MR. SEXTON: Will either of the warrants issued enable Pigott to be arrested in Paris; and, if so, will the Government telegraph to the British Ambassador at Paris or any other authority?

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I conceive that the arrest of a person in Paris would be a matter of extradition. Of course, no steps will be omitted that may seem advisable.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In view of the importance of the matter, I should like to know whether any steps will be taken to keep a watch on Houston, the Secretary of the Loyal and Patriotic Union, to prevent him from leaving the country, and to secure his presence during the sittings of the Commission? I hear that he was not in Court to-day. I do not for a moment contemplate the evasion of justice, but I wish to know whether steps will be taken to secure his presence during the sittings of the Commission?

MR. MATTHEWS: I will consider most carefully anything that the law permits me to do. I may state that I have received some further information which supplements an answer I have already given. There has been handed by Mr. Soames to the Metropolitan Police this morning a letter received from Pigott in Paris.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As I stated.

MR. MATTHEWS: The date of the postmark is too obscure for me to be able to state it to the House. There is a French postmark upon it showing that it came from Paris, and the Metropolitan Police are now taking steps, through the Foreign Office, to procure the extradition of Pigott, not, of course, upon the Bench warrant, on which he could not be extradited, but upon the perjury warrant.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I repeat to the right hon. Gentleman the Question I put to the Under Secretary in his absence? In answer to me the right hon. Gentleman said that no constables except those of the Metropolitan Police can exercise jurisdiction in the Metropolitan Police area. It is clear, if the reports are correct of the evidence taken before the Royal Commission, that two members of the Royal Irish Constabulary at least have been discharging the duty of protecting Richard Pigott. I will ask whether it is possible that that can happen without the knowledge of the Home Office?

MR. MATTHEWS: Perfectly possible. It has happened apparently in this case.

DR. COMMINS: I put a Question to the Under Secretary, but received no answer. I want to know whether it is not a notorious fact that constables belonging to the Irish police have acted as such in London and Liverpool? As the hon. Gentleman says, they have no authority to act as police here, I want to know under what authority they have acted?

MR. MATTHEWS: I stated with perfect accuracy that no Irish constable can act as such within the Metropolitan Police area. There are, however, certain Statutes in existence under which Irish constables are directed to execute warrants here.

DR. COMMINS: It is a notorious fact within my own knowledge that they do act.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The right hon. Gentleman did not answer the Question I put to him. My Question is this. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply to a previous Question, stated that no Irish constable has jurisdiction to act within the Metropolitan Police area. But, at least, two constables have sworn—if the reports be correct—that they have been acting for the protection of Pigott within the Metropolitan Police District, such constables having their services paid for by a Vote of this House. My Question is, Can constables who are in the service of the State do any kind of duty within the Metropolitan Police District without the knowledge of the Home Office?

MR. MATTHEWS: I can only say it is not within my knowledge that any constables have so acted; and I think

it is clear that no Irish constable can act as a constable within the Metropolitan Police District. It may happen that an Irish constable may volunteer, or be hired, to do the duty of a constable.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I am afraid that I have failed to make my Question clear. If it is the case of a constable paid by a Vote of this House to do duty in Ireland, how can he be present within the Metropolitan Police District for any time without the knowledge of the Home Office?

MR. MATTHEWS: It is perfectly possible.

DR. COMMINS: There have been for years, both in Liverpool and London, constables attached to the Detective Department who belong to the Royal Irish Constabulary, and I want to know under what authority they act?

MR. MATTHEWS: They do not act as constables, and have no authority to act as constables within the Metropolitan Police District.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The Home Secretary has misapprehended my Question in regard to Irish constables. I do not question for a moment that British law does not allow the capture of persons, but the British law does allow the shadowing, watching, and surveillance of persons, by Irish police officers. We have experienced that ourselves; and I wish to ask whether the same law which has been meted out to Members of this House in the shadowing of their persons, the watching of their houses, and the keeping of a constant eye upon their habits, will now be put in operation in regard to this suspicious person, Houston? I say nothing against Houston, but I merely wish to ask whether, in view of the serious statements which have been made in regard to him, and the cloud of suspicion which circles around him just now, steps will be taken—one of the witnesses having already evaded the jurisdiction of the Court—to prevent Houston from abstracting himself from the jurisdiction of Her Majesty's dominions?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Gentleman has been misled if he suggests that hon. Members below the Gangway have been what is called "shadowed."

MR. T. M. HEALY: I have constantly been shadowed.

MR. MATTHEWS: The assumption of the hon. and learned Gentleman that hon. Members below the Gangway are shadowed is absolutely unfounded.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Not only have measures been taken to watch me here, but when I go abroad.

MR. MATTHEWS: I cannot say what can be done or what ought to be done in regard to Houston. I can only repeat that no precautions that may seem necessary shall be neglected.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [21st February].—[See page 41.]

And which Amendment was—

In paragraph 8, line 4, to leave out all the words after the word "Country," to the end of the paragraph, in order to insert the words,—"But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the present system of administration in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust, that it violates the rights and alienates the affections of Your Majesty's Irish subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain:

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that such measures of conciliation should be adopted as may bring about the contentment of the Irish people, and establish a real union between Great Britain and Ireland,"—(*Mr. John Morley,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, East): In venturing to make a few remarks in support of the Amendment, I should like to preface what I intend to say with one or two brief comments on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War. I think that that speech was infelicitous in its choice of language, and that the trap which the right hon. Gentleman prepared for his opponents succeeded in catching his own friends. What are we to say to those who do not scruple without inquiry to accept at the hands

of the basest of mankind instruments that are intended to accomplish the destruction of their political opponents? I think the House has never had a fairer example of the effect of looking at the mote in our neighbour's eye, and forgetting the mighty beam in our own, than has been afforded on this occasion. I was astounded to hear the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that because there is some agreement with him on this side of the House there has been some improvement in the condition of Ireland, that, therefore, we ought to agree to the passage in the Address which ascribes the improvement to the salutary effect of the coercive measures of the Government. I cannot help regretting the ungenerous and pointless sneers which the right hon. Gentleman addressed to the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan). We have heard a good deal lately of courage and consistency. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) has abandoned the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill), his former partner in the National Party, and has become a servile worshipper of the Chief Secretary. We on this side of the House, and all right-minded and thoughtful men in the country, have regarded the course of the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division with admiration, and his courage and consistency in standing true to his Unionist principles and refusing to be dragged down to the quagmire of coercion, and for declining to tread the slippery path which has led this Government into the morasses of Pigottism and Crime. We heard the speech of the Chief Secretary at the beginning of this debate. I do not know what hon Members on the opposite side of the House think of that speech, but we on this side think that it was a singularly ineffective reply to the splendid and courageous challenge of the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley). Upon two points I was gratified by the speech of the Chief Secretary. He seems to have had a lesson in curbing his tongue, and consequently his speech was free from those errors of taste, those insults and petty sarcasms, which disfigured his previous utterances, and which have tended to alienate Englishmen and Irishmen. It also was a speech that meant no surrender, and implied that they were going to fight out this question to the bitter end. The Opposition look with confidence to the result of the controversy. The administration of the right hon. Gentleman shows his utter incapacity to look things in the face and read the hearts of men. The late Lord Derby, when in this House as Mr. Stanley, was a strong supporter of Coercion in Ireland; but if the right hon. Gentleman will look through all the speeches made by Mr. Stanley, he will not find a single sneer at his political opponents, or upon men in his power who were unable to answer him. I shall not regret to see the right hon. Gentleman retain Office for a little longer, because I know that every day he is in Office adds to the strength of our cause in regard to Ireland. We have heard a great deal about the treatment of political offenders in Ireland. Now, there are certain prison regulations in force which are an admirable result of the best temper of the best period of the Conservative Party, and they represent the spirit, not of the right hon. Gentleman, but of the Tory Party in 1887. The prison rules which were passed then were framed with the object of protecting prisoners from every form of hardship. The 28th of these rules says—

"A convicted criminal prisoner shall be provided with a complete prison dress, and be required to wear it."

There is no word in it about forcing him to wear it. It is simply an order from the Prisons Board saying, "You, Mr. O'Brien, or whoever it may be, are required to wear this dress." Turning to Rule 58, I find there that—

"The Governor shall have power to hear complaints respecting any of the offences following—that is to say, disobedience of the regulations by any prisoner,"

and so on. No one pretends that Mr. O'Brien, or any of the prisoners, offered violence to the Governor of the gaol, or any of the officials. They have simply refused to comply with this regulation. I do not dispute that that is an offence under the Prison Regulations, and that it is punishable by close confinement on bread and water; but I wish to know from the Solicitor General for Ireland or the Chief Secretary where he

finds authority for using this physical violence? If there is such authority, what is the meaning of the rule and regulation which prescribe a specific punishment for disobedience in regard to a particular rule? There is another point upon which I wish to put a question to the Government. We have been left for a long time in a state of obscurity as to the exact powers of the Chief Secretary over the Prisons Board and Governors of gaols in Ireland. The Chief Secretary, at any rate, had it in his power when he knew that Mr. O'Brien had been arrested at Manchester to send to the authorities at Clonmel Prison copies of the medical reports as to Mr. O'Brien, and particulars of his previous imprisonment. As soon as the imprisonment was announced, Mr. O'Brien had to submit to what the Chief Secretary calls "the ordinary process." The House knows well the right hon. Gentleman could have exempted the Tory Party from whatever consequences may attach to the prestige and popularity which the Home Rule Party may have gained in consequence of the treatment of the hon. Member. In his speech at Manchester, Mr. O'Brien said—

"I came here in the first place, and principally, because I was anxious, before disappearing, as no doubt I shall do for a considerable time, from the public scene. I was anxious to meet Mr. Balfour's own constituents here in Manchester, to ask them very respectfully, but very solemnly, to-night whether they are proud of his work in Ireland?"

Again, this hon. Gentleman also said—

"How do I come here to-night? Why, simply by walking away after giving fair and public warning that I intended to walk away out of a Court House in and around which there were over 200 armed policemen with no other business except to guard me. Probably the stupidity and utter incompetency of Mr. Balfour's agents are quite sufficient to account for it, without imputing to them any treachery to their masters."

Well, what was the meaning of that speech of Mr. O'Brien's? It was a mighty appeal to the people of Manchester and Salford to be true to the principles of the past, and to reject the right hon. Gentleman and his policy. That was the sting of Mr. O'Brien's offence, and this was rendered all the worse by the fact that his presence in Manchester at all showed that Coercion was a miserable sham, and that men, said to be conspirators, could walk from one end of Ireland to another, through hundreds of armed men whose duty it was to secure them. Although we were yesterday challenged by the hon. Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) not to say anything about Mr. Mandeville, I will venture to say something about that gentleman. I think it clear that the Chief Secretary and all the powers of the "Castle" might, had they mitigated his treatment at a critical period of his illness, have prevented that wrecking of his constitution which resulted in his death. But they would not do so. The Chief Secretary sent Dr. Barr to get the prison officials up to concert pitch, in order that they might carry out this policy of humiliation, degradation, and physical torment to prisoners. The most offensive and degrading speech I can remember being uttered by a public man in this country was that in which the Chief Secretary referred in mocking tones to Mr. Mandeville after his death, and tried to insinuate that it was due to other than the real causes, casting a slur on Mr. Mandeville's good name which tended to injure it after his death. It is a fortunate thing that such deeds and words do not often characterize English statesmen. In one of the old debates when Daniel O'Connell was speaking of the wrongs of Ireland, and was met by the mocking laughter which is too common among hon. Members opposite below the Gangway, he made this passionate protest:—

"Yes; though I am a mere Irishman, the iron of despotism has not so entered into my soul that I do not bitterly hate slavery and dearly love liberty;"

and when they mocked at his words, he said—

"The mocking laughter of Englishmen is the most powerful argument for Repeal, for it proves a perfect absence of knowledge in respect to Ireland, and a complete incapacity to legislate for that country."

The Chief Secretary might have learned something more of Ireland had he gone back to O'Connell, or remembered the saying of Lord Beaconsfield—

"The blood-and-iron method of governing Ireland would fail. It failed under Cromwell. The Irish are susceptible to kindness, and full of sentiment—inconsiderate of the means necessary to gain the desired ends, but easily governed if dealt with in the right way. That way was by recognizing that imagination

played quite as important a part in the government of nations as reason."

Let hon. Members on the opposite side look in their *Hansards* for 1833 and 1836, and read the speeches of Lord Grey and Lord Althorp, followed up by that of O'Connell. Those were the old days when the old savage spirit of Irishmen, struggling against terrible wrong and oppression, expressed itself in a savage way. At that time there were 9,000 crimes, as against 500 when the miserable Coercion Bill was introduced; and now, when we hear of a few slight outrages in Ireland, we know that they are the lingering symptoms of the old disease which is steadily dying out under the influence of the beneficent reforms that have been effected. The Chief Secretary may immure Mr. O'Brien in gaol, but he cannot silence him. Before he was sent to prison the first time, he said, speaking of the Irish Members generally, "We are the storm-bells on a dangerous coast"; and this is the function they have had to perform. They have told us of the evils existing in some of the dark and out of the way corners of Ireland, and of the miserable plots of desperate assassins in America. They have been the warning beacon of what may come to pass if we are not advised in time. And again, this year, when he was sent to prison, Mr. O'Brien left ringing in the ears of Irishmen and Englishmen the words—"We can see our way to keep Ireland crimeless and unconquered." There is a simple test of what the National League is, and of what it has done. I ask hon. Members opposite do they approve of the Land Laws passed for Ireland and of the reductions of rent that have been effected in Ireland? Have these been just or unjust; fair or unfair? Say one thing or the other. Either deny their justice, or acknowledge that they are due to the wisdom, sagacity, and patriotic efforts of our great Leader the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone), and also the efforts of the Land League. These great reforms would never have been carried but for the light thrown on the state of Ireland by the efforts of the Land League and National League, while, with regard to the revision of rents under the Act of 1887, that was due solely to the efforts of the Irish Party. I ask the Tory Party whether this saving of rents to the extent of hundreds of thousands of pounds to the poor Irish tenants is just or unjust? If just, why not give the credit to those who fought for and obtained it? We know what was said by that simple and straightforward soldier who was sent away from Ireland for speaking the truth—Sir Redvers Buller—that when the National League was established, and the people got their land, and took the matter into their own hands, there was no longer one law for the poor and another for the rich. If there be, as we are told, improvement in the condition of the Irish people, is it not fair and honest and reasonable to give the palm to those who have fought the battle for them? We are told that these men are mere conspirators, and have no following; but the Chief Secretary himself, in a lucid interval during his latest speech, recognized the fact that these men had the ear of the majority of the Irish people, and that they had the real power to work a reform in Ireland. He said—

"What we or any Government could do for Ireland would be but a small part of that which they could succeed in effecting for themselves."

The Prime Minister, in another place, said they were confident of the future, because, by their reforms, they were stealing away the hearts of the people from their natural leaders. In conclusion, I would say that if that is the real and sincere, as well as the avowed, view of the Conservative Ministry, and if they are confident their policy will bear inspection in Ireland or in England, then let them face us at the polls by referring this great question of whether they have been false to their pledges and promises made at the last General Election. We, at all events, have no fear of the result. We know well what it will be. We know that you, the Conservative Party, have betrayed your trust, and that the people of England, when you have the courage to challenge them, will record their opinion in favour of the principle embodied by this Amendment.

*MR. MARK OLDROYD (Dewsbury): Sir, I claim that indulgent forbearance which it is the time-honoured custom of the House to extend to Members who pass through the trying ordeal of rising for the first time to address it. I should not have intervened, but during the debate I have been thoroughly impressed

with the fact that the Amendment so accurately expresses my own views on the great question which now divides opinion on the respective sides of this House—views that I have expressed to the constituency which recently sent me here by an overwhelming majority —that I have been constrained not to give a silent vote upon it. Last night the Secretary for War, when challenged on this side of the House as to the accuracy of what he was stating, explained his inaccuracy by saying he could not be expected to know the details as well as hon. Members from Ireland. I have not the experience nor the knowledge of the right hon Gentleman, but am in the position described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Morley), when he said, in recounting his earlier experiences of the House, he was possessed of that natural simplicity of soul which novices here are supposed to have, and listened to the debates with a view of ascertaining the facts of the case under discussion, so that his mind might be enlightened and his judgment corrected. I shall, in dealing with this subject, confine myself more especially to one point—namely, the alleged cruel and vindictive treatment of political prisoners in Ireland. The public opinion of this country has endorsed by multitudinous resolutions the opinion that the treatment of political prisoners in Ireland is cruel and vindictive. The public opinion of the country is not arrived at, nor is it formed any academical niceties, or by legal subtleties, or by the artifices of captious logic, but rather by hard and obdurate facts. I claim a special experience in connection with this matter, because I have recently come from the influence of those "ignorant assemblages" to which the Secretary of State for War referred last night. I submit that the national sentiment of the country is expressed in the proposition that political prisoners ought not, in fairness and in reason, to be treated as common felons. The age is too far advanced for that; and the introduction of a treatment of that kind would seem to mark a process of retrogression to the days of the Tudors and Stuarts. There is also a general impression throughout the country that the administration of Irish prisons within recent months has been more cruel and more relentless than has been the practice of recent Governments; that this change has been brought about by the extraordinary severity of Resident Magistrates and the Governors of gaols—men who know on which side their bread is buttered, who have taken their cue, if not from the expressed, at all events from the implied, approval of their conduct by the Chief Secretary. Sir, the Chief Secretary for Ireland cannot evade the responsibility which, as Minister of the Crown, he holds towards the House and the country in this matter. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Morley) quoted from the Prisons Act, and the quotation was sufficient to show that not only prisons, but every prisoner, is subject to the regulations of the right hon. Gentleman. Upon casting my eye over the phalanx of notabilities who sit on the opposite benches, I have failed to discover any Minister other than the Chief Secretary who is responsible to this House or to the country for the administration of Irish prisons. The right hon. Gentleman cannot shield himself, as he has attempted to do again and again, behind the Prisons Board. If, as was demonstrated in the course of this debate, the present management of these prisons is more severe than it was formerly, we want to know on what authority the increased severity was first instituted? The right hon. Gentleman has made admissions, and one was with regard to his action as affecting the priests who came within his jurisdiction as criminals. He made the admission that "he almost strained the law" in favour of those gentlemen. I should like an answer to this question —on what principle is the person of a priest to be considered more sacred than the person of an hon. Member of this House? Because a man is a minister of religion is no reason why he should be shown greater gentleness than an hon. Member of this House, who is a representative of the people and a custodian of their liberties. If the right hon. Gentleman will admit the persons of hon. Members are entitled to equal treatment with the persons of priests, I venture to ask why does he accord unequal treatment to hon. Members, by relieving the priests of the indignity of wearing prison garb —an indignity which he inflicts on hon. Members. An hon. Member, on Monday night, observed that Irish Members

were loud in the protestations of their desire to serve their country, but that whenever they came into the clutches of the law they began to whine and whimper. But I submit that the Members of this House who are now suffering imprisonment are not protesting against it, but against the indignities to which they have been subjected—the cutting of the hair and moustache, the insistence upon their wearing prison garb, the dragging of hon. Members in prison garb through their constituencies. These are matters inconsistent with propriety and decency and honour. Speaking at a memorable banquet on the 2nd February, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Balfour) spoke of Mr. O'Brien's eccentricities, and, on Friday last, he was reported to have referred to these eccentricities as a mania. But these eccentricities and this mania are what the people of this country respect. We are told that the prison discipline in Ireland on the part of the right hon. Gentleman is not vindictive. If the hon. Gentleman is not amenable to that accusation, perhaps he is amenable to another, that of absolute indifference. I should like to know what the treatment of prisoners in Ireland would be if he were to assume the attitude of vindictiveness? I will not attempt to paint the picture. Let us hope that that frame of mind will not seize the right hon. Gentleman; but I fail to see that he could show any greater cruelty than he displays now, unless he introduces a Bill recommending the restoration and rehabilitation of the racks and thumbscrews which adorn the Tower of London. It is an admitted principle that we must judge of a tree by the fruit it bears. What is the effect of this mild administration in Ireland and in this House? I have always regarded the position of a Member of Parliament as an honourable one; but, according to the theory of the right hon. Gentleman, admission to this House involves association with criminals. It is an indignity upon this House that its Members — political prisoners though they be—should be ranked among ordinary felons. The usages of this House are already being moderated to meet the emergency, and instead of referring to imprisoned Members by the constituencies they represent, their own names may be used. I was remarkably struck on Friday night by a fact to which I will call your attention. On Friday last there was imposed upon the Speaker the duty of making an announcement that Mr. Carew had been arrested, and within five minutes of that announcement, on the Motion of the Government, Mr. Carew was admitted to a Committee on the Standing Orders of this House. What is the effect of this mild administration upon the prisoners themselves? Does the Government suppose for a moment that these men will be inspired by fear, or that they will be filled with respect for the administration under which they suffer? What will be the effect upon the Irish public? Will it inspire them with respect and obedience to the law which imprisons and degrades with indignities the leaders of their public opinion, men highly respected, if not idolized? This mild administration fulfils the prophecy of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone), on the occasion of the third reading of the Crimes Act, when he said that the new coercion would have to be of a more drastic and a more searching character than had ever disgraced the annals of this House. In another place reference has been made to the dramatic skill with which the Nationalist Party represent their sufferings. I do not wish to indulge in a dramatic representation, but I do say that the spontaneity and simultaneity with which public opinion has been expressed in this country within recent weeks on this very question of prison discipline in Ireland amounts to something which must be ominous—tragically ominous — to right hon. Gentlemen who now occupy the Government benches. By common consent it has been declared again and again, at these gatherings of "ignorant persons," that the discipline in Irish prisons is unworthy of civilized government, and the determined call, again and again repeated, that there should be an appeal to the country, is proof of the heartfelt determination of the country to wash its hands of this disgraceful stigma, and remove from itself the indignity of a Government which sullies its fair name. I will not enter now into any discussion of the justice of the sentences which have been recently recorded. I will only say this—that with regard to the sentence upon Mr. Finucane, from

the first it has been my conviction that it was an outrage upon common sense. With respect to the sentence upon Mr. Harrington, I regard it as neither less nor more than a caricature of legal proceedings. I regard the sentence upon Mr. O'Brien as one huge political blunder. I am also bound to point out that the course of this debate has not served, in the least, to mitigate the impressions and opinions which I had formed before the debate opened. I wish to call attention to one distinct feature of this debate which has impressed itself upon me. There has been carping criticism about words and details, but a lamentable absence of discussion of the broad principles which are involved in this question. The high-minded and eloquent speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Morley), in proposing his Amendment, was followed by a speech from the Chief Secretary which was merely a reply in detail, and did not touch upon the principles involved. And we were regaled last night with a speech from the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Saunderson)—a speech which has been characterized by an hon. Member on this side of the House as an exhibition of buffoonery and braggadocio. What struck me in the speech of the hon. and gallant Member was the announcement of a change in his strategy. On former occasions he has always said that he and his friends would line the ditches; now there is to be a change in the *régime*, for his enemies are to occupy the ditches. That rather indicates, happily, that the attitude of the hon. and gallant Member may be changed when the day comes that the Irish people will be accorded those rights which they have so long and so persistently claimed. Sir, I think this bandying of words, these charges and counter-charges, in a debate involving great principles is unbecoming and futile. I beg, Sir, to conclude with an expression of my own private opinion, backed, I believe, by the great majority of the nation, that the statement of the right hon. Gent. (Mr. Gladstone) is perfectly correct, that this question of the government of Ireland will continue to block the way of useful legislation for the whole country until we give practical effect to the principles of popular representation by handing over the Local Government of Ireland to the people of Ireland, with such safeguards for Imperial interests as this House in its wisdom may think necessary.

*Viscount WOLMER (Hants): With the permission of the House I venture to congratulate the hon. Member who has just made his maiden speech, and I trust he will allow me, although not of much longer standing as a Member than himself, to give him a hint that the next time he endeavours to impress Her Majesty's Government with the terrors that await them he will not use such long words as "spontaneity" and "simultaneity." I would suggest one word which, although also beginning with "s," is shorter, and would explain the meaning much more clearly—"Schnadhorst." The hon. Member (Mr. Oldroyd) and the hon. Member who commenced the debate to-day have both, in accordance with the word that has gone forth, made their chief point of what is called the treatment of political prisoners. I do not misrepresent them, or the Parties they represent, when I say that the battle now waged all over the country is on that line. We accept the challenge—we are perfectly content to fight them on that ground. We deny the cruelty—we deny the injustice. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir George Trevelyan), of course unintentionally, misrepresented what the Chief Secretary said, when he said that that Minister placed political prisoners on a level with dynamiters and assassins. All the Chief Secretary argued was, that a political motive was assigned as the reason for differences of treatment, and he asked how they were to make the distinction, and whether a dynamiter did not claim to be prompted by a political motive? That is a totally different thing to putting political prisoners on a level with assassins and dynamiters. Where does the hon. Member who spoke last draw the line? Where does the political prisoner begin and where does he end? Whilst that inquiry remains without an answer, it is obviously begging the question to talk about the cruelty to Members of Parliament who are political prisoners. The hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Saunderson) said that if a Home Rule Parliament were established he intended to break the laws of that Parliament. Sup-

pose the hon. and gallant Member did break the laws under such circumstances, and was punished for it, he would entirely forfeit the sympathy of his friends here should he endeavour to gain separate treatment on the ground of being a political prisoner. The hon. Member (Mr. Oldroyd) made a remark with which I entirely agree, that in a multitude of disputes general principles are lost sight of. I could not help remembering as he spoke the words which accidentally dropped from the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) at the time of the passing of the Crimes Act, two years ago—namely, that every act of the Executive Government would be viewed through a magnifying glass. He did not mean to use those words, because he corrected himself and said he meant microscope, but they exactly represent what has taken place; for the Party led by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) have left aside the great issues, and fastened on a mass of detail which they have magnified. But what is the question? Is Ireland to be governed by Her Majesty's Government or by the National League? The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) and his followers have come to the conclusion that it had better be governed by the National League. Are we going to hand over the government of Ireland to the Party represented by the National League? We are not, and that is really the point for which we are fighting. But another point has been touched upon by the terms of the Amendment. It presents for Her Majesty's approval a new policy for Ireland—conciliation, by which, no doubt, is meant the establishment of what is commonly called Home Rule. It must be confessed that the word "conciliation" was very aptly chosen by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Morley). If he had used a more definite term, it might have failed to secure the support of any other of his Party than himself, for it is characteristic of that Party that no two Members of it mean the same thing by Home Rule, and they have no actual scheme of Home Rule ["Oh!"] Hon. Members cry "Oh!" I suppose they have in mind the Bill presented to the House in 1886, but we have been informed a good many times that that Bill has been abandoned, and surely I am guilty of no misrepresentation when I say no scheme has been evolved from the great crowd of ideas which flood the minds of Gentlemen of that Party. If the word "justice" had been chosen, it would have more correctly described the grand yearnings and vain imaginings of the Party of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone). Under that term "justice," almost any scheme of sentiment as distinguished from reason could be embraced. If there is one thing to which that Party is committed, it is the retention of Irish Members in this Parliament; but the right hon. Gentleman has stated, and he has never withdrawn the statement, that it passes the wit of man to devise a scheme—[Mr. WINTERBOTHAM: No.]—the hon. Member will no doubt refer me to the speech where he has withdrawn that statement; but the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) said—"I defy the wit of man to invent a scheme by which Imperial and local affairs can be separated in this Parliament." Has he ever withdrawn that, or pointed out how they can be separated? Surely the hon. Member will not go down to his constituents and suggest that the Irish Members are to manage their own affairs and ours also? If hon. Members from Ireland are to be kept in this Parliament at all, Imperial and local affairs must be separated. It is playing with the common sense of the people of this country to ask them to hand over the Government to a Party which cannot define the remedies which they are to propose. I entirely agree with one sentence which fell from the lips of the hon. Member for East Northampton. The hon. Member said that he and his Friends had nailed their colours to the mast, and would accept no compromise whatever. I remember some foolish persons belonging to my own Party thought that the result of the last General Election had decided the question of Home Rule once and for all, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle said that that was only the beginning of the struggle. So, too, if the day should come—and I do not believe it will—when the supporters of Home Rule have an overwhelming majority, that would be far from the end of the struggle. They have a large Party in the country, and so

have the Unionists, and if a measure of Home Rule were brought forward a great deal of criticism would be applied to it. The struggle before us is long; I regret the bitterness caused by it; but if hon. Members think there is any faltering on the part of those with whom I act, or that a chance victory would land them at their goal, they are greatly mistaken. The history of this question shows that if one Party is determined so is the other.

SIR JOSEPH W. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): Everybody will admit that, even in the most favourable circumstances, the Government of Ireland is encompassed with great difficulties. I am told by hon. Friends who sit on the other side of the House that if we who sit on these benches above the Gangway were to take away our adherence from those hon. Members who sit below the Gangway the reign of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would be a very satisfactory one; that law and order would be restored; and that contentment and happiness would gradually dawn upon Ireland. In my view, such an argument is one which it is impossible to hold, because we may be perfectly certain that discontent and disloyalty would still prevail in Ireland unless the source of that discontent and disloyalty should have been taken away. Whilst I believe that a great deal of discontent in Ireland arises from agrarian sources, there can be no question that what is called the Home Rule movement not only pervades the agricultural but largely also the urban population in Ireland, for you will find it quite as strong in the large towns of Ireland as it is among the rural populations. Sir, it was my duty and my pleasure about two years ago to second a Resolution moved by my hon. Friend the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire, in which we opposed what is commonly called the Coercion Bill, and in that Resolution we showed that such a Bill would not tend to the pacification of Ireland, or loyalty of Ireland, or good government in Ireland; for loyalty, good government, and pacification could only be brought about by other means. We divided the House upon that question, and I want hon. Gents. opposite to recollect that three-sevenths of the House of Commons voted against the second reading of the Coercion Bill. We were beaten by the large majority which the Government possessed, but still there is the fact that that Bill only became an Act of Parliament by the will of the majority, and by nothing like an unanimous vote, and it stands on the Statute Book to this day with that fact tainting its very birth. The Motion I have the honour to support to-day is one which speaks very much in the same language; it condemns the present mode of governing Ireland, and it points to a better way of doing it. My noble Friend, who has just delivered a speech well worthy of his name, says that none of us are agreed upon what Home Rule means. I am not one who altogether approved the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian; I thought it embraced far too much the question of dealing with the land of Ireland in a way which I have always protested against, but with the main principles he laid down I still concur, and I take it that those principles are, that we should give the Irish people the management of their local affairs, that we should not interfere with Imperial integrity, and that in anything that is done as regards Ireland, we must take care to protect the minority, to whichever Party it may belong. These, I understand, are the general principles laid down by my right hon. Friend, and they are the principles to which we still adhere. Now, Sir, every hon. Member in this House will agree that the present position of Ireland in lamentable. Four-fifths of the people are dissatisfied with the manner in which they are ruled; disloyalty abounds, the law-breaker is honoured, the law is administered against the will of the majority, and the majority only submit to the law by force. Now, Sir, I have gone as deeply into this question as any Member can do, and in my travels through Ireland I have everywhere been struck by the general appearance of dilapidation and the universal discontent which prevails. There is no contentment among the tradespeople; there is a general feeling that things are wrong and that some great effort on the part of the law-makers is needed to make them right. I have looked into the Returns. There is no real value in the statistics of im-

provement on which the Chief Secretary has so much relied, which are mainly concerned with the Saving Banks deposits. While pauperism has steadily diminished in England and Scotland, it has enormously increased in Ireland. In 1860 the number of Irish paupers indoors and out was 41,454; in 1878, 85,530; and in 1888, 113,947. The cost in 1860 was £530,000; in 1875, £943,000; and in 1886, £1,087,000. Then, Sir, the population in Ireland has decreased by nearly half a million. In 1878 it was 5,282,246; in 1888 it was 4,790,614. In Scotland, a smaller country, the population has risen from 3,628,268 in 1878 to 4,034,156 in 1888; an increase of 405,888. A great deal has been said about the Savings Banks in Ireland. It is true that the deposits in Government Savings Banks have gone up £92,600 since 1883, while in the Trustee Savings Banks they have diminished £52,000 in the same period. But then, on the other hand, more than a million sterling has gone from the pockets of the landlords into those of the tenants. The investments in Irish Railways have risen from £35,444,000 in 1883 to £36,457,000 in 1887. But the Return laid on the Table by the right hon. Gentleman shows a decrease in cash balances and deposits in Joint Stock Banks in Ireland since June, 1883, of £1,415,000. The Government and Indian Stocks held in Ireland in 1871 amounted to £36,927,000; in 1883 to £31,532,000, and in 1888 to £28,856,000, or a decrease of 8,000,000 since 1871, and of over two and a half millions since 1883. To sum it up, we have a decrease since 1883 in cash deposits of £1,400,000, a falling off in Government and Indian Stocks in Ireland of £2,700,000, and in Trustee Savings Banks of £52,000. As against this you have an increase in the Post Office Savings Banks of £926,000, and of investments in railways of £1,000,000 sterling. Does that show that your plan of governing has made Ireland thrive? Look at the Income Tax Returns. Between 1883-87 the Returns of Assessments for the United Kingdom had gone up £16,561,904; in Ireland they had gone down £33,685. The country is governed by a large number of police. In 1878 you had 12,000 men; now you have 14,000, although the population has decreased by half a million. The cost of the police has risen from £1,200,000 to £1,600,000. The cost of prisons in Ireland has risen from £40,000 to £134,700, yet people have been running out of the country. In 1878 the emigrants numbered 29,492, last year there were 78,900. Then the evictions and notices of evictions are increasing steadily. In 1886, 3,771 families were evicted; in 1887 the evictions under the old Act and the notices issued under the new affected 6,382 families; in the first three quarters of 1888, 9,035 notices were issued under the new process and 819 under the old Act; these will probably affect 50,000 people. In these sad figures you have the picture of a country steadily getting worse on your hands, unlike England, Scotland, and Wales, and unlike every colony in which you are interested. Well, now, I have asked myself, Is the manner in which you are governing Ireland government by a Constitutional country, or is it government by autocracy? It seems to me to be a Government by autocracy, and in a manner utterly at variance with everything contained in the Bill of Rights and in Magna Charta. We have in Ireland 26,700 soldiers and 14,000 policemen—an armed force of 40,000, simply to govern 4,800,000 people—or one armed man for every 117 of the total population—man, woman, and child. I shall be told that the soldiers must be kept somewhere, and, therefore, it does not much matter. But the test is whether, in case of a great war, these soldiers could safely be removed. Every man knows that they could not, and it is equally evident that the work these men have to do is in the highest degree distasteful to them. Can it be imagined that the Scots Greys, with their magnificent record, and with the name of Waterloo on their colours, found it pleasant work to escort the parish priest to gaol? In the proclaimed districts there is no freedom of public meeting or of the Press. One of the speakers last night used the metaphor of a gaseous mine into which it would be unsafe to take a lighted candle. To that I reply that if the mine were cleared of gas, there would be no danger in lighted candles, and I say it is the policy of the Government which, to continue the metaphor, makes Ireland a gaseous, and therefore dangerous, mine. It is im-

possible to call that a Constitutional Government under which one-quarter of the chosen Representatives of the people either are, or have been, in gaol for crimes which would have been no crimes except for an Act of Parliament passed a couple of years ago. The forces arising against the Government are great, and they are so great that they will ultimately prevail. Behind the Government sit many Members who have pledged themselves to vote against coercion, and a system cannot last which is opposed by a powerful minority in the House, and against which more than one-half of the intelligent people of Great Britain have earnestly protested. At Manchester Mr. O'Brien was actually allowed to occupy the bed in which the Heir next but one to the Throne had previously slept at the Town Hall, and the next day the hon. Member was held down in gaol by four warders, the Governor looking on, while his hair was cut off. These things are not, and never can be, consistent with good government. If the laws are to be respected they must be respectable. Our laws are out of harmony with the best feelings of this country; they are no longer respected and obeyed, and the man who breaks them is not looked on as a criminal. You have 85 out of the 103 Members elected by popular constituences in Ireland; even in Ulster the majority of the elected Members is against you, the Boards of Guardians are composed of men opposed to you, nearly every Corporation and Mayor is against you, and, singular to say, the Lord Mayors of London, Dublin, and York, all of them are opposed to your plan. Now, Sir, while I protest against the law, I protest more strongly still against the manner in which it is carried out. It is all very well to raise technical objections as to whether the Chief Secretary has this power or that. If he has not the power to treat these men with decency, he ought to ask the House for that power, and he could get it in 36 hours.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): But he has the power.

SIR J. W. PEASE: Yes I believe he has the power, and indeed it has been proved that he has; but he does not exercise it. Priests are allowed to wear their own dress in gaol, and why not Irish Members of Parliament? There is no prison regulation to compel men to have their hair and their beards cut. These are wanton insults, and they aggravate the state of things in Ireland and the state of public feeling in England. But what is the course of action of the right hon. Gentleman? He defends his policy. He defended it at his Balshazar feast in Dublin. I call it by that name, for if ever the handwriting, "Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting," appeared, it was written on this occasion by an indignant country on the wall of the banquetting-room that night. The right hon. Gentleman was surrounded by friends. I looked through the list the other day and found there were 13 or 14 Crown Prosecutors, five or six Dublin Castle Officials, and 10 or 12 defeated Unionist or Tory Candidates. These were the men who laughed at the sufferings of Mr. William O'Brien. Why did Mr. O'Brien refuse to put on the prison clothes? For the very reason that I would have declined. I should not have felt myself to be a criminal, and we have no right to treat him as a criminal. Having got his political adversaries under his feet, as the right hon. Gentleman has done, it is perfectly clear that those under him have learnt the lesson and taken up his cue as to the manner in which they are to act. The powers possessed by the Chief Secretary seem to have been exercised with irritating recklessness. Two Members of this House have been arrested during elections which they were attending, a third was arrested immediately after a large meeting at Manchester, and two priests have been arrested just as they were leaving Divine Service. The law seems to be constantly begetting fresh breaches of the peace. Let us take the case of Mrs. Moroney at Miltown Malbay, whose tenants have for years been paying £100 a year rent when they ought not, according to the reductions made by the Land Commissioners, to have paid more than £45 a year. This is the way in which crime is got up in Ireland. A landlady exacts £100 for every £45 that she ought to receive; that leads to boycotting; and that in turn to respectable people being sent to gaol with hard labour. In 1887 you proclaimed the National League in Miltown Malbay; it was rife enough then, but after that,

every person in the place joined it. Carowners were next prosecuted for refusing to drive the police to a place where a proclaimed meeting was to be held; three blacksmiths were prosecuted for refusing to shoe Mrs. Moroney's horses, other people were prosecuted for refusing to supply her with goods, and the publicans who closed their houses on the advice of the parish priest were also prosecuted, and eleven went to gaol. Their only offence was that they refused to supply liquor to the police, who had already a good store of it at their own barracks. That is the way in which crime is got up in Ireland. A landlady exacts £100 when she is only entitled to £45, the tenants object to pay, then comes boycotting, and then prosecutions under the Act. Your object in passing the Crimes Bill was not to suppress ordinary crime, but to suppress crimes made by the Crimes Act—to suppress the League, boycotting, intimidation, and the Plan of Campaign. Have you succeeded at all in putting down the League? Not a bit of it. The League has at this moment 1,800 branches, and of the alleged suppressed branches I see from 30 to 50 reported each week. How have the funds come into the League since you began your persecution? In the first fortnight of February, 1885, its receipts amounted to £242, and these have yearly increased till in the first fortnight of February, 1889, they reached the sum of £676. In to-day's *Daily News* I see that the last fortnight's contributions, partly from America and partly from the Colonies, amount to £2,553. Now as to intimidation. Very few persons have been able or even inclined to take farms from which tenants have been evicted; and while I do not say a word in favour of the Plan of Campaign, I know that it was one of those things which have been forced on the people of Ireland. There have been under it more than 100 combinations, and of these only four have been in any way interfered with by the action of Dublin Castle. There are still 40 estates under the Plan of Campaign, and in all the rest of the 100 cases terms have been arranged satisfactorily to the landlords and tenants. While there have been cases of injury on some of these estates, as a general rule it can be safely said that there has been hardly any agrarian crime on them. As for law and order, it seems as if they are only to be observed so long as it suits hon. Gentlemen opposite. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) has declared that a Home Rule Parliament will not be obeyed by Ulster. Speaking at Portadown on the 19th inst., the hon. and gallant Gentleman said—

> "As to a Home Rule Parliament, nothing under heaven will make us recognize this Parliament or obey its laws so long as we have right arms to strike with. In a fortnight we could put 50,000 men in the field under arms."

If there is a Dublin Parliament it wil be one authorized by the Imperial Parliament, and its laws will take their tone from those of the Imperial Parliament. No one has asked for an Irish Parliament which should not be subservient to the English Parliament. No Parliament can exist in Ireland which is inconsistent with the integrity of the Empire and the proper protection of minorities. And when these pledges have been given by hon. Members on this side of the House it is impossible for the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh to urge that law and order should be observed now, and at the same time declare that they will not be observed under a Dublin Parliament. The fact is that the Government have to deal with a gigantic strike against high rents in Ireland, for reasons which would have justified the strike of any body of English operatives. Rents in Ireland have been high and in many cases oppressive. We have only to look at the Blue Book to see that some rents have been pulled down 60 and 80 per cent. How have you dealt with this state of things? You have dealt with it just as our ancestors tried to deal with the strikes of operatives in England. You have passed repressive laws. Some hon. Members remember how we petitioned in this House for a Royal Commission to be sent to Sheffield to inquire into the things being done there. That Commission reported and the result was the repeal of some of the labour laws and the legalization of trade unions, which has had the effect of bringing all their doings to the surface. Instead of having workmen who were to be distrusted, employers now have workmen with whom they can sympathize and who sympa-

thize with them. If the same plan were adopted in Ireland, and if the complaints of the tenants were treated as those of reasoning and thinking men, the same results would occur. There is no general disposition in Ireland to withhold rents justly due. Another difficulty of the Government lies in the fact that there is no general confidence in their mode of conducting business. Four-fifths of the people of Ireland and half the people of England and Scotland honestly believe that the Resident Magistrates are entirely in the hands of the Irish Government; and they also believe with very good reason, that in the gaols special provision is made for the Irish Members of Parliament, the political foes of the Government. This is shown in the way in which right hon. Gentlemen opposite followed up the charges made against Members of the Irish Party. The Irish Members asked to be tried before their Peers; but instead of that three Judges were appointed. I have nothing to say against those Judges as honest and upright men, but it is an unfortunate circumstance that all three should be of the same political creed. Every facility had been offered by Her Majesty's Government to bring home the charges of complicity in horrible crime against the Irish Members. The Resident Magistrates and all the force of the Irish police have been pressed into the service of proving that these men had complicity with crime. You have done almost worse than that. You have even opened the cell doors of every Fenian and dynamitard in prison to get evidence against the Irish Members. These are the sort of things that exasperate public opinion and make the government of Ireland more difficult than it ought to be. There is hardly a peasant in Ireland who believes that he would get justice. There is the case of murder at Kinsale by emergency men who were engaged in an illegal raid on cattle. The accused persons were brought before Lord Courtown, President of the Land Defence Association of Ireland, and nothing was done. Two men were brought before the Grand Jury. Of that jury I am told that 22 out of 23 were landlords or agents. No true bill was found. At the Coroner's inquest five or six witnesses swore that the two men charged had been parties to the murder. It is clear that these men were equally guilty with the men who were hung at Manchester some time ago, because murder was done while they were engaged in an illegal act. This unfortunate position of affairs is owing in a great degree to the Land Question. The Bessborough Commission in 1845 stated that freedom of contract did not exist, and the Land Act of 1881 showed that it did not exist. Mr. Trench, before the Cowper Commission, said that the landlords were not their own masters, that mortgages were held at 4 and 4½ per cent. over half the land in Ireland. Mr. Samuel Murray Hussey said—

> "The way the mortgages are pressing their claims, and the Government their claims with most merciless severity, the landlords will soon be ruined. You have the tenants in distress and arrears, and half the landlords on the verge of ruin."

What are the remedies proposed? The hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) brought in a Bill to allow the leaseholders to come into Court. That Bill was rejected, but the Government granted the concession in the following year. You lost a year in dealing with these people. But you have not attempted to repeal that law which I consider one of the greatest hardships of the Irish tenant—the law as laid down in the case of "Adams v. Dunseath." In that case the tenants' own improvements were held, for the purposes of rent, to be practically the landlords' improvements. No attempt has been made to remedy such an utterly immoral and wrong state of things as that. Then the Government had obtained £10,000,000 with which to buy land, but the report as to the hands into which the bulk of that money is going is contrary to the accepted view of the probable recipients when it was granted. But it is said that the Land Court is open. Yes, but the Land Court is not open to the tenant in arrears who may be evicted. The Cowper Commission advised the Government to revise the judicial rents every five years, but they have not acted on that advice. Indeed, from first to last, the Government have opposed that view. In 1886, Lord Salisbury declared: "We do not think it would be honest in the first place, and we think it would be exceedingly inexpedient;" and yet, in the

following year, something was done in the direction indicated. Now, so far as I can learn, there has been no general reduction in the statistics of agrarian crime. In the quarter ending December, 1886, there were only 80 cases of agrarian crime, putting aside threatening letters, but in March, June, and September of last year there were 98, 98, and 108 cases, some of them of a graver character than those which occurred in 1886. The condition of the country ought to have been better now, because not only have the Irish people obtained the sympathy of the English and Scottish people, but the times as a whole are better. The truth is that the policy of the Government is at fault. There are only two roads open to the Government. You must either cease to govern Ireland by constitutional means—by turning the Irish Members out of Parliament, and governing the country by the force of the 40,000 armed men at present there—or else you must resort to constitutional methods of government. You must act boldly with regard to legislation in Ireland, with regard to the land, the arrears, and the charges on land. I believe the Government will have to deal with the mortgagees of Ireland, because if the State lays down what rent is to be paid it ought to take upon itself to say what charges the land can bear with that rent upon it. The Irish Representatives must be retained in the Imperial Parliament. In this place you will have in the future to guard all Imperial interests and the integrity of the Empire. In the Imperial Parliament we shall have to do that which has always been the doctrine of those who have advocated Home Rule—to take great care of the minorities of Ireland, whether Protestant or Catholic, landlords or tenants. But the unity of the Empire, which is now greatly in jeopardy, the very safety of the Empire, depends upon bringing about a better state of feeling in Ireland. I believe we shall have to train the Irish people to manage their own affairs, and shall have to place upon their shoulders the responsibility of maintaining law and order, before there will be anything like a state of perfect law and order in Ireland. If the Irish people fail in that task, the English people can be no worse off than they are to-day. On the other hand, if they succeed we shall have solved a great problem; we shall possess that which we have not possessed during the whole of this century—a United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. MADDEN, Dublin University): Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Pease), it occurred to me to ask the question whether, judging from the evident sincerity with which he spoke, his speech would not have been delivered in the opposite direction if his information had been correct on the various matters which appeared to influence his judgment. The hon. Member called attention to several points which have been discussed over and over again connected with the unfortunate affair which ended in the death of Kinsella. The hon. Member is under the impression that the grand jury threw out the Bills. [SIR J. PEASE: I said so.] The grand jury did not do so. Bills were found against several prisoners, which went before a petty jury. The case was afterwards tried before a jury at the Assizes. It is true that the grand jury ignored the Bill against Freeman, but it is also true that the learned Judge stated at the trial that it had been admitted by every one that there was no evidence that he committed the murder.

SIR J. PEASE: I would not use Freeman's name, because I would not desire to drag it again before the House. But Freeman was the man against whom the coroner's verdict was brought. The grand jury threw out the bill against Freeman. I alluded to the case in order to show how little confidence the people have in the administration of justice in Ireland.

*MR. MADDEN: Quite so. One of the reasons why the hon. Gentlemen supports the attack on the administration of the law in Ireland is that the grand jury ignored, and, according to the Judge, properly ignored, the bill against Freeman. But the Crown put the other men on their trial, and they were tried before a jury. A charge of jury-packing has been made, but not a single man called upon that jury was challenged. There was an instruction given which might have resulted in the exclusion of jurors—namely, that no landlord or land agent should be on the jury; but what I understand hon. Members to refer to as jury-packing is a process

accomplished by the exclusion of jurors when they come up to be sworn. The accuracy of the hon. Baronet's information may be inferred from his statement that the decision in the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath has deprived the tenant of property in his improvements. He has further stated that the Land Court is not open to the tenant under arrears. I can inform him that the Court is open to every tenant under arrears to have a fair rent fixed. The hon. Gentleman stated that in the parts of Ireland where the Land League has been proclaimed it is illegal to advise tenants as to the rents they are to pay, and that there is no liberty of speech. If the hon. Member were in the habit of reading the reports of meetings held in those parts of the country, and the newspapers which circulate there, he would see that there exists very considerable liberty, if not licence, both of speech and writing. I think I have some idea as to what the hon. Member had in his mind when he said the advisers of tenants were not at liberty to give advice to tenants who were about to buy their holdings. He must have had in his mind the case which the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan) mentioned in a letter—viz., that of the hon. Member for North Monaghan (Mr. P. O'Brien), who, it is alleged, was imprisoned by a Bench of Magistrates because he advised the people not to buy at a certain number of years' purchase. Now, that statement is absolutely and totally incorrect. I have examined the facts of that case. I have in my hand the conviction of the hon. Member for the offence. The hon. Member for North Monaghan was convicted on one charge, and on one only—namely, that of advocating the Plan of Campaign on the estate of Mr. Smithwick. There was not a conviction on the charge of advising the tenants on another estate—that of Lord Monck; that charge was not pressed. The conviction was for advocating the Plan of Campaign, and had nothing to do with the other charge as to advising the tenants on Lord Monck's estate not to purchase.

MR. LEAMY: Because they said, having convicted him on the first, they would not go into the second.

*MR. MADDEN: I am instructed that the case was not presented by the Crown and was not entertained by the magistrates, and that there was no conviction on it. It has also been stated that the hon. Member was sentenced to three months' imprisonment with hard labour. The real sentence was three months' imprisonment without hard labour. So much for the accuracy of the facts as present in the mind of the hon. Gentleman who asks the House to adopt the amendment. Now, looking back to the course of this debate, I submit that, although there has been a great deal of detailed criticism, there has really as yet been no attempt to deal with the broad issues raised by the amendment. There has been a great deal of detailed criticism of certain sensational incidents which have occurred, and which, I will add, have been created in the course of prosecutions; but there has been no attempt on the other side to go to the root of the matter, to criticize the circumstances under which the prosecutions were instituted, in order to show that they were unnecessary or harsh under the circumstances, and there has been no attempt to prove that in any particular case was an unrighteous or unjust decision come to. I have always admitted that where the Government have been compelled to ask for additional powers it is the right of the House to require a strict account of how they were used, and that it is the duty of the Government to be prepared to give such an account. A great portion, however, of the speeches which have been delivered from the other side have dealt with a totally different question from that of the administration of the law: they have suggested an alteration and a radical change of the law as regards the treatment of a certain class of prisoners. Now, no such principle has ever been adopted in the English law as that any person, be he a Member of Parliament, a priest, or a peasant, who has been convicted of an ordinary offence, even allowing, for the sake of argument, that the offence was committed for the purpose of producing a political effect, to get an advantage for a political party, or even to benefit some particular class of the community—no such principle has ever been admitted under British law that his *status* or position should be different from that of the man who committed precisely the same offence under different circumstances and from different motives,

What I want the House to notice is that all such discussion as that to which I refer is absolutely irrelevant to a motion which arraigns the present Government for their administration of the existing law. What are the issues raised by the Address and by the Amendment? The paragraph of the Address which it is sought by the Amendment to expunge is that in which we assure Her Majesty that we learn with satisfaction that the Statutes recently passed for the restoration of order and confidence in Ireland have been already attended with salutary results. The House is asked to negative that statement. Has there not been a salutary result effected in the direction of restoring order and confidence in Ireland? ["No."] An hon. Member says that no progress has been made in that direction. The hon. Member who challenges that statement differs from all the other speakers on the opposite side, because they have all admitted the improvement, and the only question is as to the cause to which that improvement is attributable. It is a fact that cannot be denied that agrarian crime in Ireland is now lower than it has been since the present agitation began in 1879. It cannot be denied that since June, 1887, under the working of the Crimes Act agrarian crimes have diminished to an enormous extent. For the quarter ending June 30th, 1887, they were 229, and for the quarter ending December 31st, 1888, the total number was 133. But more remarkable still are the figures connected with boycotting. The total number of persons wholly boycotted has diminished from 866 in 1887 to 56; and the total number partially boycotted has fallen from 4,035 to 656.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Are these the same figures as were given by the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Stanhope) last night?

*MR. MADDEN: The figures are brought up to the 31st of December, 1888, and are taken from the Official Return. I am not aware what figures the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War quoted.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The Secretary of State for War read out a wholly different set of figures.

*MR. MADDEN: These figures are absolutely correct as regards the period to which they relate. Let the House for a moment realize what that means. If the Government have nothing else to show to the country as the result of their administration of the Act, the removal of human suffering and misery which these figures indicate would, I think, justify this House in passing the Act of 1887, and entitled the Government which administers it to the gratitude of the country. The hon. Member who spoke last has called attention to several figures relating to the state of Ireland, but his comparison was, for the most part, between Ireland as it is now and its condition at a period antecedent to the present agitation, which commenced in 1879. If the state of Ireland now were compared with its condition three or four years ago, the most remarkable results will be found to have been achieved. It is admitted that the country is more prosperous, that the general relations of different classes of society with each other have improved, that legal obligations are met with greater regularity, and that in particular the relations of landlords and tenants are much more friendly than they were before the present administration of the law commenced. Public confidence has been largely restored, and public credit has made a distinct advance. By public credit, I do not mean national credit, but the degree of confidence which leads men to invest their money in great public undertakings. One of the most crucial tests of returning enterprize is afforded by the success of public undertakings which have been started. There have been a number of schemes started under the Tramways Acts. Out of 18 schemes which have been set on foot only three or four in 1885 had attained a certain degree of prosperity. In that respect there has been a most marked change. On one of these railways 5 per cent. debentures are now selling at £13 15*s.* or a considerable premium. West Clare 4 per cent. debentures were practically unsaleable in 1885. Now they are selling at 95, or only 5 per cent. discount. The Ilen Valley Railway in 1885 is not an undertaking under those Acts, but it is similarly circumstanced. It owed a large sum to the Board of Works, and endeavoured in 1885 to raise money to pay it off, but was then unable to issue debenture stock even at 5 per cent. They

have now succeeded in bringing out £20,000 at par, bearing only 4 per cent, and have forwarded to the Board of Works a cheque for that amount. These facts will be admitted to be most crucial tests of returning prosperity. Another significant circumstance pointing to a better state of things is afforded by the diminution of prosecutions under the Crimes Act itself. We all look forward to the time when the peculiar forms of crime against which the Crimes Act is directed will have disappeared. At all events, Irishmen on this side of the House hail with satisfaction a decrease in the number of prosecutions under the Crimes Act, which unfortunately we are still obliged to institute. It may be asked what is to be said of the fact that prosecutions have been instituted against several Members of Parliament, and that proceedings have been taken against Roman Catholic priests and others who enjoy an exceptional share of the confidence of a section of the public. I would remind the House that its attention has been unduly drawn to accidental incidents which do not go to the root of the matter, and I would direct its attention to the exact evil with which these prosecutions are grappling. The present Government is engaged in a struggle against an organized system of intimidation. A particular phase of that struggle, which is no new struggle unfortunately, may be traced, I think, to a statement the Lord Lieutenant made in the course of the last autumn. In that statement his Excellency called attention to the number of evicted farms taken by persons in the open market. After that statement the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) boasted that there were 5,000 evicted farms in Ireland. The year had been fairly prosperous, and the Lord Lieutenant's statement was perfectly true. As has been admitted by speaker after speaker, a great engine used by hon. Gentlemen opposite would have been lost if the improved state of things had been allowed to continue. The fairest way of dealing with what ensued is by reading the words of the principal leader of the agitation. A letter written by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), and dated the 25th of August last year, has been made public. In it the hon. Member said—

"My dear Sheehan,—It will be most necessary to show Balfour that his troubles in Ireland are only beginning. We are organizing a series of great demonstrations through Ireland for the latter end of September and beginning of October. You ought to arrange a series of meetings from parish to parish in your division to address your constituents, announcing them publicly. I will, if possible, attend some one of them myself. Don't mention my name publicly as suggesting the meetings. You cannot announce too many of them, but one will do to begin any Sunday after next."

Now, that was in August last. The same Gentleman on another occasion—I am reading from the *Freeman's Journal* of January 10, 1889—said—

"A good many people were rather amazed—you in Kildare have the reputation of being rather a fat and sleepy people; but these people forget that."

Further on the hon. Gentleman said—

"The besetting misfortune of Irish history has been that while one district was fighting another was asleep, whereas if the whole 32 counties of Ireland had been got to strike together we would have been spared many a miserable century of bondage and of degradation in Ireland. What is the lesson that has been taught to us by the struggle of the last few years in Ireland? Why, Mr. Balfour has only had a mere handful of men in a few corners of Ireland to deal with, and yet they had been more than a match for all the power of his gaols and of his armies."

The series of meetings which followed the letter of August was organized for the purpose of converting the opposition to the law of a handful of men into the opposition of the country generally. I must call the attention of the House to the manner in which that object was attempted to be effected. One of the most typical cases is that of two Catholic priests, Fathers Farrelly and Clarke. In that case a landlord named O'Connor had evicted a tenant. A meeting was called near the evicted farm for the avowed purpose of boycotting O'Connor. It was for speeches delivered at that meeting that these two gentlemen were prosecuted and sentenced to five weeks' imprisonment. A case was stated. It came before the Court of Exchequer in Ireland, and I will proceed to read from the judgment of the Lord Chief Baron, who then characterized the advice given to the people by the priests, and which is in substance identical with that which was given on other occasions with regard to land-grabbers. The Lord Chief Baron clearly laid down the meaning of the Act, and said that it was clear from the speech of

the defendant that he used language that came within the definition of the Judge. The defendant told his hearers to make the place unwholesome for land-grabbers, for so long as they remained they would reign and rule over the people. It is idle to argue, as it has been argued, that the words were simply an expression of disapproval of land-grabbing. The words in which the learned Judge referred to the speech indicated the gravity with which he regarded it. The reverend gentleman, he said, told the people to make the place hot for land-grabbers, for so long as they remained they would reign and rule over them; he was a Roman Catholic clergyman addressing the people, not alone in regard to the law of the land but the law of God; he was speaking of moral law, and his words had the more effect inculcating the duty of the people; he told them to boycott O'Connor; to carry out the object of making the place too hot for land-grabbers, and he came to the conclusion that the evidence was overwhelming.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What was the charge?

*MR. MADDEN: There were two charges — conspiracy and inciting to conspiracy. ["Boycotting!"] Hon. Members may or may not be aware that conspiracy to boycott is an indictable offence under the Common Law independently of the Act of 1887, and has been so decided. Incitement to a conspiracy to intimidate is an indictable offence by the law of the land, and in no single one of the prosecutions to which I am directing attention are they other than offences indictable at Common Law. Not one of them can be said to be a new offence created by the Crimes Act.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman read the charge, or kindly say under what term of English law there is such an offence as inciting to conspiracy?

*MR. MADDEN: The law on the subject is very simple. ["But the charge!"] I have not the charge here; but I have what is more important, the judgment of the Lord Chief Baron, which states the substance of this charge. The law on the subject is very simple, and has been laid down authoritatively; there must be evidence of incitement to enter into a conspiracy; it must be established that the object was to induce persons not to deal with another in the way of trade or business, and by the exercise of influence to affect the freedom and action of the person against whom it is exercised. That is the substance of the charge as stated by the Lord Chief Baron. But the point of my observation is, that this is a typical case. I cannot bring forward every case — time would not permit of it, and there is the further objection that a number of the cases are under appeal, but this case is a typical one of a class in respect to which our action is arraigned—namely, cases in which we find it necessary to proceed against clergymen of the Roman Catholic Church and Members of Parliament for their action in regard to intimidation. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary has alluded to the Kenmare estate and to the outrages that followed the introduction of the Plan of Campaign there. He was asked to describe the nature of the outrages, but he had not the list then before him. I have now the particulars, and I can say that they included a threatening letter, killing and mutilating of cattle, cattle stealing, moonlighting, injury to property, and an incendiary fire. Now, I pass on to the meeting held at Ballyneale. It was held in the neighbourhood of an estate upon which a man named Duggan was boycotted for taking a farm from which another man was evicted. He was boycotted and under police protection when the meeting was held.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Where is the evidence of that?

*MR. MADDEN: I state it as a matter of fact. In speeches made on the occasion references were made to this property, and it is important to remember what is likely to be the effect in such a district of exhortations to the people to deal with land-grabbers as they knew how. It is said you may do in England what you may not do in Ireland, and possibly you might hold meetings in Middlesex and Kent, and harmlessly use language that in Ireland would incite to outrage and crime in counties where the Plan of Campaign is in operation, and still more in the neighbourhood of estates where tenants have been evicted, and where the persons who have taken the farms have to be placed under police protection. The same observation applies

to the Castle Connell meeting, which was held in the neighbourhood of the evicted farm, which had been taken by a man named Quilty, who was denounced by name at the meeting, and, as a result, Quilty was driven from the farm. I think it is important that the attention of the House should be directed to the more serious prosecution, for if those who are responsible for the administration of the law contented themselves with dealing with the cases mentioned by hon. Members opposite, the important cases would not be mentioned at all. I will now call the attention of the House for a moment to the class of cases that have been adduced on the other side as grounds of the indictment against Her Majesty's Government—small and trivial cases. It is a remarkable fact that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, who moved the Amendment to the Address, supported his indictment of the conduct of the Government in the administration of the Crimes Act by referring to cases under the ordinary law where persons were bound over to good behaviour. Two young men were charged with obstructing a constable at Ennis. The offence, the right hon. Gentleman said, consisted of laughing at a policeman. This he said the defendants denied, and the magistrate sentenced one to three months' imprisonment in default of bail for good behaviour. In the first place, this was not a prosecution under the Crimes Act at all, but under a Statute that prevails both in England and Ireland. The defendants deliberately insulted the constable, called him "a low scoundrel, the meanest man in Ennis," and said "we will soon kick you out of the town." This is one of the cases made the foundation for a grave indictment of the Government for their administration of the Crimes Act! The proceedings were under the ordinary law, one of the accused gave bail for good behaviour, the other was imprisoned in default of giving bail. Then another case brought forward was one arising out of a charge of riot and unlawful assembly, and two men were found guilty and imprisoned for a month. The offence was one of the incidents of the Plan of Campaign, the accused formed part of a disorderly crowd engaged in hooting the agent of Lord Kenmare. The right hon. Gentleman quoted from a newspaper article, but the newspaper extract from which he read contained only the evidence for the defence. It is upon the prosecution of "corner boys" and roughs such as might be found in any town that the right hon. Gentleman founds his case. These cases have really nothing to do with the charge against the Government, and is it fair or right to bring them forward and found upon them a serious charge against the administration of the law? The hon. and learned Member for Stockton (Sir Horace Davey), of whom I wish to speak with the respect I have for his professional position, commenced his speech by saying, "I am not going to make charges against the Government except upon evidence I have sifted and found satisfactory;" but what did he do? He proceeded to found a charge against the Government upon a newspaper extract, the date of which he was unable to fix, and as to which his notion of the locality was vague. However, I have been able to identify the case. The hon. and learned Member commented severely on the administration of the law, under which, he said, one man was convicted for conspiracy and for unlawful assembly. He argued that one man cannot make a conspiracy, or an unlawful assembly. I do not quarrel with his law. But on examination I find that the man was proceeded against, not for conspiracy or unlawful assembly, but for intimidation. What was done by the representative of the Crown was this, out of a number of cases of intimidation one man was selected as having been guilty of the most intimidatory language, and he only was prosecuted. This was the entire foundation for this charge against the administration of the law, a charge which the hon. and learned Gentleman said he would only bring on sifted and satisfactory evidence.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Were there not fourteen young men actually charged?

*MR. MADDEN: Yes. Fourteen were charged with intimidation, but the prosecutor, on examining the evidence, found that by far the greater part of the intimidation was from one man, and decided to proceed against this one only. This, I think, indicates discretion and forbearance on

the part of the prosecution. Instead of proceeding against 13 comparatively innocent men, they proceeded against the one against whom the charges were more grave, and he was convicted. I call attention to this as showing the recklessness of the charges made by hon. and learned Gentlemen whose position should afford some security against such attacks, and who disclaim any intention of making a charge except on clear and satisfactory evidence. Some other matters have been mentioned in debate to which I ought to call attention. I have to mention a matter to which attention was called by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle. He asked, how does it occur that Mr. O'Brien, who delivered a speech on the last day of September was not prosecuted in respect to that speech until the month of January. The answer is this; in November, last year, a pledge was given by my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, that no Member should be proceeded against until the expiration of the discussion on the Estimates. Now, it will be within the recollection of hon. Members—the painful recollection, perhaps—that our discussions did not terminate until Christmas Eve, leaving but a short period of time before the re-assembling of Parliament. That leaves a great portion of the time accounted for. Then Christmas intervened, and then a prosecution was instituted in January. So the lapse of time from the giving of the pledge is accounted for. Surely hon. Members would not suggest that the pledge given should have been violated? If it were observed, the prosecution could not have been instituted at an earlier time. Two or three statements were made by the hon. Member for Mayo, in the course of his speech, that ought to be dealt with. The hon. Member read a statement in reference to the treatment of persons imprisoned for complicity in reference to the Belfast insurance frauds. I am in a position to say, on the authority of the Governor of the prison, that the statement is entirely without foundation.

MR. CLANCY: When was the statement submitted by the Governor?

*MR. MADDEN: This question has nothing to do with the point which I am making. I say the Governor states that the statement made is without foundation in fact. Then the hon. Member referred to the exceptional treatment of another prisoner, a Mr. White, who was described as a magistrate. I have to state that this man never was a magistrate at all. Why was he described as a magistrate? Was it to insinuate that, on account of his position, he was exempted from ordinary prison discipline? This is the gravamen of your charge; but if you want to establish that differences in treatment are made, you must prove it by other instances than this.

MR. DILLON: I may be allowed to say in passing that I stated this gentleman was a Magistrate, not laying particular stress upon it, but to indicate his position as one of the landlord class.

*MR. MADDEN: The hon. Member usually weighs his words. However, now that it appears that the person in question was not a magistrate, the hon. Member attaches no particular importance to the statement. He never was a magistrate, and, further, I may say he was under infirmary treatment suffering from a serious and dangerous disease. Such is the case brought before the House to suggest there has been in certain cases a variation from the ordinary prison discipline. I am not going into all the matters of detail which have been referred to. Time will not allow of it; but before I pass from this subject I would venture to remind the House that my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary has always said that he was ready to consider as an important and interesting question what changes, if any, should be made in England and Ireland alike in the treatment of different classes of prisoners, but that meanwhile the existing law must be fairly enforced by the Government. The position of prisoners under the Act of 1877 is regulated by Statute. It is suggested that the Act places a dispensing power in the Lord Lieutenant or the Home Secretary, enabling him to say that this man shall be treated under one set of rules with leniency, while another shall be treated with the utmost vigour of discipline. There is no such position occupied by the Lord Lieutenant or Chief Secretary in Ireland, or the Home Secretary in England. It is easy to contradict, but

I challenge support of the contradiction by argument. The Prisons Board can under a section of that Act make rules subject to the sanction of the Lord Lieutenant in Council, and these rules are binding on the Executive, when made with the sanction of the Privy Council, as fully as if they had been contained in the Act of 1877. It is not in the power of the Chief Secretary or the Home Secretary here arbitrarily to depart from the rules so made. The rules may be right or wrong, but until they are altered there is no power to depart from them. Earlier in this discussion attention was called to the force and violence alleged to have been used in enforcing these rules, and it has been said if a prisoner refuses to wear the prison clothes he should be punished according to the rules. Now, there are certain rules that cannot be so enforced. For instance, if a prisoner refuses to enter his cell, is it contended that he shall be deprived of his ordinary allowance of food so long as he refuses? There are certain continuous acts of non-performance against which you cannot enforce the rules by a continuous deprivation of food. If you did you might kill the prisoner in enforcing the rule. It is plain there are some rules compliance with which can only be effectually enforced by some exercise of force. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman arraigns the administration of the law in Ireland, because he says it deprives Irishmen of their rights. That is a very strong statement, and I presume it belongs to that class of statements as those in which we are told that the Crimes Act created new crimes. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in a letter published on February 20, said the Tories and Dissentient Liberals thought fit, under the pretence of legislating against crime, to pass a law having practically no concern with crime except that it makes Irishmen liable to punishment for acts of exclusive dealing, which same exclusive dealing is practised by Tories in England, so that was a crime in Ireland which was not a crime in England. Further, he said that Mr. O'Brien was prosecuted for threatening to do what Primrose Dames did in England. Now, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman is that we passed a law making a new crime—making that a crime which is not a crime in England. He applies that statement to the prosecution in question.

MR. GLADSTONE: No; I apply it to the speech of counsel.

*MR. MADDEN: Does the right hon. Gentleman admit that all these prosecutions for conspiracy are for offences which would be crimes in England? No, he does not admit that; that is the exact point upon which we differ. With one solitary exception, the principal cases under the Crimes Act to which I have referred are prosecutions for conspiracy. Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that under the section under which in certain classes of cases jurisdiction is given to Resident Magistrates to deal with cases of conspiracy, the classes of conspiracy are defined as those punishable by ordinary law? Let any hon. Member get up and show that under this section of the Act proceedings can be taken against any persons for a conspiracy that was not indictable by Common Law before the Act was passed. If that is so, what becomes of the suggestion that that which is an offence in Ireland is not an offence in England? If there is any meaning in the language of the letter I have referred to, the right hon. Gentleman states that the kind of "exclusive dealing," as he has called it, practised against what are termed land-grabbers, is of the same kind as the exclusive dealing alleged to be practised by Primrose Dames in England. Well, I should like to understand how the descriptions of boycotting which have been given by right hon. Gentlemen opposite apply to the alleged exclusive dealing of Primrose Dames in England. We have a description of boycotting from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division, which I shall read to the House. In a speech delivered on the 17 Oct., 1885, he said—

"What is boycotting? Boycotting off all communication and all the advantages of civilization, and all the means of life for the people who have taken farms which the National League did not intend they should take, and from all people who communicate or deal with them, or work for them. These wretched people are called 'land-grabbers,' and they are denounced to the vengeance of the mob in printed notices and in violent speeches. Now,

when Lord Spencer was in Ireland to issue these notices and to make these speeches was a punishable offence, and what was more it was an offence which was punished and punished very effectually. But hardly was Lord Spencer out of office, which in his case meant power, for I see no distinction, than a meeting near some evicted farms was held for the purpose of intimidation, a meeting which Lord Spencer had forbidden to be held, was held——"

It must be satisfactory to the right hon. Gentleman to know that he has now no reason to apprehend the dereliction of duty that he then condemned. I have now to refer to the case of Mr. Harrington. It has been stated that the Court expressed an opinion that Mr. Harrington's speech was of an innocent character. Now, Mr. Harrington was convicted of the offence of publishing that speech as made at a meeting of the National League with the purpose of promoting the objects of that Association. My right hon. Friend has called attention to the circumstances under which the meeting was held, and what I wish to point out is that it is incorrect to say the Court pronounced an opinion directly or indirectly upon the innocent nature of the speech. What they did say was that there was no proof of writing to the Plan of Campaign other than the publication in the newspaper that the meeting was held and the speech made there.

MR. R. T. REID: Was there any evidence of the speech having been delivered?

*MR. MADDEN: There was the evidence of the speech afforded by its having been published in the defendant's newspaper. Mr. Harrington however was not convicted on a charge of delivering the speech. Of course to support such a charge there should have been evidence beyond the publication, but I am meeting the distinct statement that the hon. Member is suffering imprisonment for a speech the Court declared innocent. That is not a fact. The guilt or innocence of the speech was never adjudicated upon. Of course the report of the meeting and the danger of reporting such a proceeding under all the circumstances of the case were before the Magistrate. Then it is said this was a vindictive proceeding on the part of the Magistrate, and right hon. Gentlemen accept that statement. I would call attention to two circumstances that should be borne in mind. The Magistrates being of opinion that it was a dangerous thing under the circumstances to have these notices of National League meetings published in the paper, offered not to punish if Mr. Harrington would give an undertaking not to repeat the offence. That may have been wise or foolish, but at least it does not indicate the existence of any vindictive feeling. In the next place I want to point out that an appeal could have been taken from the sentence to the County Court Judge, and these County Court Judges are as independent of the Government as any Judge in England. In all my 25 years' experience of and acquaintance with the traditions of the Bar I never heard of a County Court Judge being promoted by the Ministry. [*Cries of* "O'Hagan."] Lord O'Hagan resigned his chairmanship, entered Parliament, and became a distinguished Member of the Legislature.

MR. T. M. HEALY: John O'Hagan, not Thomas.

*MR. MADDEN: Mr. John O'Hagan was not a County Court Judge, he had retired.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He was promoted.

*MR. MADDEN: The hon. and learned Member is misinformed, Mr. John O'Hagan was not a County Court Judge when he was made a Judge of the High Court, he had retired from that position, and was simply a practising Member of the Bar, not only technically and legally, but absolutely as a matter of fact. The County Court Judges are independent of the Government, and there is no ground for suggesting that services were rewarded by the promotion of a County Court Judge to the Bench. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle made a serious charge against a Magistrate for refusing to state a case on a point of law that the Court of Exchequer decided ought to be argued. I only refer to it to show how he is mistaken.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Was not a case applied for and granted after it had been refused?

*MR. MADDEN: The case was not refused, upon the point raised in the Court of Exchequer, but on other grounds.

MR. T. M. HEALY: On this point I do not hesitate to assert the hon. and learned Gentleman is mistaken.

*MR. MADDEN: I must remind the hon. and learned Member he will have full opportunity of replying to me. Let him show what was the point upon which the Court of Exchequer required argument. The suggestions of the right hon. Member for Newcastle were directed against the whole administration of the law, and therefore it is I trouble the House with this matter. He attacked the resident magistrates generally and brought forward this instance as an illustration, he said, of their administration. I must say, however, that I think, as compared with what I have observed on former occasions, the attacks on Resident Magistrates are now less violent. I congratulate the House on the fact that the merits of the decisions of Resident Magistrates seem to be recognized even by hon. Members opposite. How can it be otherwise when we see the results of appeals? My right hon. Friend has stated that the percentage of successful appeals from the decisions of Resident Magistrates is only eight. I think that the difference in the results of Crimes Act appeals, as compared with those under the ordinary law, is fully accounted for by one fact—that the Legislature has taken care that in each case one member of the Court shall be a gentleman of whose legal knowledge the Lord Lieutenant is satisfied. This consideration suggests itself to common sense as accounting for the difference in the two classes of Appeals, and the fact that only 8 per cent of the decisions under the Crimes Act have been reversed on appeal. What ground is there for the statement that the administration of the law has deprived people of their rights? What rights have been assailed? Do hon. Members claim the right to carry on their agrarian policy by means of crime—by what in England would be regarded as criminal conspiracy? Does this become a sacred right when done in the interest of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends? I challenge any lawyer to get up and say that in the case of any prosecution for conspiracy the Act of 1887 has created new crimes, or deprived men of the exercise of what in England is a lawful right. No; the administration of the law has deprived no man of his rights. I go further, and claim for it that it has restored to the humblest man in Ireland what Englishmen regard as the highest right of all—the right of individual liberty, the right of every man to buy from whom he pleases, to sell to whom he pleases, to hire what land he pleases, and pay what rent he pleases. When these rights shall be fully restored to every man, the administration of the law will have accomplished its task. I submit that the House and the country will approve the efforts—the honest and successful efforts—which have been made by the Government towards the attainment of that end, the substitution of the reign of law, with its needful sanctions, for the lawless coercion which has so long destroyed the liberty and paralyzed the energies of Ireland.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I have listened with great care and interest to the speech just delivered, and though I am willing to admit it was characterized with the hon. Gentleman's usual good taste and tone, and which I think favourably distinguishes his speeches from the more aggressive tone of those of the Chief Secretary, yet I venture to think that speech did not carry the case of the Government one step beyond where it was left by the two Members of the Government who preceded him. The hon. and learned Gentleman has dealt with many matters of detail put

before the House by hon. Members on this side, and he has dealt with the question of the treatment of political prisoners to some extent, and upon this subject I will follow him later, but he has not attempted to grapple with the remarkable speech in which my right hon. Friend indicted the Government administration of the Coercion Act. The hon. and learned Gentleman has travelled over much of the ground traversed by the Chief Secretary, and especially in reference to the diminution in the practice of boycotting, justifying that paragraph in the Address to which we take exception, the words referring to the salutary effects of the Coercion Act. If the statistics the hon. and learned Member has quoted as to a diminution in the crime of boycotting are to be relied on—though, for my own part, I feel some hesitation in accepting them implicitly—but assuming they are correct, I can only say that we on this side rejoice at such a diminution. But it must be permitted to us to believe that that is not due mainly or even in part to the Coercion Act, but is due mainly to other circumstances, namely, improvement in agriculture, the great rise in agricultural prices, and other circumstances, among which undoubtedly the passing of the Land Act of 1887 has had a good effect in bringing about the termination of many agrarian disputes. It is partly due also to combinations of tenants having in many instances closed disputes between landlord and tenant, and where this has been the case the districts in which such disputes existed have become quiet and boycotting has come to an end. No doubt also it is partly due, as the hon. Member for Mayo said in his remarkable speech, to the consciousness on the part of the Irish people that a large proportion of the people of England sympathize with them, and are prepared to consider and redress their grievances. To these causes, rather than to the operation of the Coercion Act, we attribute the improvement, and, if time permitted, I could show historically that in no previous instance has a Coercion Act reduced crime, but it has rather had a reverse effect. It would be more to the point if the Government could show there has been a reduction in the number of prosecutions under the Act. On that we have no statistics given us, but it is a well-known fact that during the last two months, and since the close of last Session, there have been a greater number of cases under the Act than in any previous period of the same length of time. I need only refer to the number of Members of Parliament sent to prison or convicted and awaiting appeal. Probably the result of the appeals will be that a vast number of convicted men will be sent to prison. Now there are a few cases under that head which I should like to bring to the attention of the House. The hon. and learned Member has alluded among other cases to one at Pilltown, in County Kilkenny; but his account of the facts has been inadequate even to the point of misrepresentation. The truth of the matter is that 14 young men were charged with shouting "grabber" outside the house of a man named Power. Power, for refusing to give evidence against the men, was committed for eight days, and it is no wonder that he said he had suffered more from the police than from the people. The case against the 14 young men was adjourned; but Power still refused to give evidence. For want of evidence 13 of the young men were dismissed; but the fourteenth was called upon to find bail for his good behaviour, and on refusing was sent to prison for six months. It seems to me that this man who was convicted suffered great hardship; but this is only one illustration of the way in which the Coercion Act is administered at the present time in Ireland. Another case occurred on January 29, when seven men at Dundalk were tried for illegal meeting. The evidence consisted in proving them to have shouted in the streets, "We are the men of '98, Young Irelanders." Their own story was that they were singing a well-known song. They were sentenced to three months' imprisonment, which, whether their story was true or not, was a severe punishment, and shows the harsh state of things now existing in Ireland. Again, in the beginning of February, 31 young men in two batches were summoned for

illegal meeting at Waterford, the only evidence being that they had groaned at the police. They were called upon to give bail for their good conduct, under a Statute of Edward III., and on refusing were sent to prison for three months. Another case occurred at Waterford a few days later in September, where 13 young men were prosecuted for attending a procession held in honour of the so-called Manchester martyrs. There was a demonstration on their being conducted to gaol, and on February 20, 20 other men were dragged from their beds after midnight and prosecuted next day for taking part in this demonstration. This case is not yet finally settled. Then there is yet another case —that at Kilfinane, Co. Limerick, where Michael Kelly, secretary of the local branch of the National League, was charged with intimidation towards John Kelly, with a view to cause him to do an act which he had a legal right to abstain from doing—namely, attend a meeting of the Glencoe branch of the League. There was a dispute between John Kelly and Mrs. O'Donnell, which had been referred to the Arbitration of the League. The League decided in favour of Mrs. O'Donnell, and John Kelly refused to carry out the arrangement. Then Michael Kelly wrote this letter to John Kelly—

"I am directed by a Committee of this branch to inform you that a Resolution adopted by them some time ago condemning your action in respect of Mrs. O'Donnell, will be sent to the surrounding branches if you fail to put in an appearance next Sunday at the meeting of the same."

For this, the Secretary of the League was convicted and sentenced to two months' imprisonment. These cases fully and completely prove the harshness with which the Coercion Act has been carried out in Ireland. They are cases in which no English jury would ever convict. And the main point of the Coercion Act is the withdrawal of such cases from the juries. The Chief Secretary has asked in what way the liberty of the subject has been violated, and the reply is, that the right of Irishmen to trial by jury has been violated, and is being violated every hour and every day. I have more than once declared that all the prosecutions taking place under the Crimes Act may be traced directly or indirectly to some dispute existing between landlord and tenant. My conviction is that nothing would be easier than for the Government to get rid of all the cases under the Coercion Act and clear away the existing disputes between the landlords and tenants by a slight modification of the Act of 1887. It is surprising to see how many cases arise out of a single dispute. In the case of Lord Clanricarde no fewer than 170 prosecutions have taken place, and 140 persons have been sent to gaol. In the case of Lord Massereene, 54 persons have found their way to gaol; and in the case of Captain Vandeleur, 41 persons have been imprisoned. On the estate where Inspector Martin met his death, 98 convictions occurred. These figures can be connected directly or indirectly with the remaining disputes between landlords and tenants. If the Government would deal with the subject in accordance with the demands of the Irish people as put forward by their Representatives, all these disputes might be cleared away, and all necessity for prosecutions under the Crimes Act be at an end. It appears to be one of the cardinal points of the policy of the present Chief Secretary not to listen to the demands of the Irish Representatives. This is quite conspicuous both in legislation and administration. The right hon. Gentleman has during the past two years never made a concession of importance to Irish opinion. What the Irish Members have demanded he has rejected and refused; and what they most hate he has thrust upon them. Any concessions he has made have been to the Liberal Unionist Members, in order to keep the Government in power, as was avowedly stated by the Prime Minister. It is not only a question of policy but one of demeanour and speech, and the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman in the House of Commons and on the public platform have been uniformly in contempt of Irish opinion and the wishes and views of the Irish Members of this House. I venture, further, to say that from the time of the Union to the present day there has never been a Chief Secretary who has carried this policy and principle to the same extent as the present Chief Secretary. The only Chief Secretary that at all compares with him within

that period in the contempt which he exhibits for Irish opinion, and in the manner in which he deals with Irish questions, is Mr. Stanley in 1832; and we all know now that Mr. Stanley brought down the Government of Lord Grey. I have little hesitation in saying that the same result will be the outcome of the attitude and policy of the present Chief Secretary in connection with this Government. The fact is there are only two ways of governing Ireland under the Act of Union consistently with the maintenance of that Act. The first is to govern Ireland as we have governed Scotland—by deferring to the views and the wishes of the Scottish people on matters of legislation purely affecting that country. The other way is to treat Ireland as an integral part of England—as an English county—and to give it equal rights and privileges with the rest of the English people. But the policy of the present Government and of the present Chief Secretary has been to adopt neither of those courses. He has treated Ireland as if it were a Crown Colony, and as if its Representatives were not entitled to be listened to, nor has any deference paid to them; and it seems to me that the logical conclusion of that Policy would be to get rid of the Irish Members from this House altogether, and to treat Ireland precisely as if it were a Crown Colony. I say that that is a policy which cannot be successful, and that as time goes on the Chief Secretary will find it more and more impossible to carry out a policy of that kind. I would illustrate this particular policy by the treatment the right hon. Gentleman has accorded to the Irish Members in respect to prosecutions under the Coercion Act. But if I refer to the treatment of Irish Members it must not be supposed that I confine my observations solely to them. There are many others in Ireland, persons of all stations and degrees—priests, editors, merchants, farmers, and peasants—who have all been treated in the same manner under the Coercion Act. In my opinion, they are all entitled to equal treatment, but we contend that in cases purely political in their character they ought not to be treated as common criminals. No one can doubt that the Irish Members in prison have been actuated by purely political motives. Out of 24 Irish Members who have been prosecuted and convicted under the Coercion Act, only two have escaped being treated as common criminals. In my judgment, they have all been convicted of offences which are not crimes according to the English Law, of offences which a jury in the United Kingdom would not have visited with a conviction. These gentlemen have been convictedof offences committed for political motives alone, and in cases where they have acted for the most part under the firm belief that their position as representatives called upon them to speak and take the course they pursued—that of advocating the cause of the weak against the strong. I venture to say that in no other country in Europe would offenders of this kind be treated as common criminals. These gentlemen have been convicted of offences which should be placed in the category of sedition and seditious libel, and persons convicted of those offences are treated by law as first-class misdemeanants. I am rather inclined to think that if these persons could have been tried at all in England, they could only have been tried for seditious libel. That is, perhaps, a matter of law, but I have consulted an able lawyer on the point, and he has informed me that if Mr. O'Brien could have been tried in England it would only have been for seditious libel. The only parallel case in England to that of Mr. O'Brien was that of Cobbett in 1831, tried by Mr. Justice Denman. Besides, the majority of Irish County Court Judges who have dealt with these cases have directed that the offenders shall be treated as first-class misdemeanants. I may quote in this connection the judgment of Mr. O'Connor Morris—one of the ablest County Court Judges in Ireland—in the case of Mr. Patrick O'Brien. Mr. O'Connor Morris said—

"I do not think I in any way exceed my powers when I exempt these gentlemen from the harsh degradation of the ordinary prisoner. In cases of sedition the Act prescribes that the accused shall be treated as first-class misdemeanants. The cases before me approach more nearly to sedition than anything else. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that these meetings are incidents of a great secret movement that is taking place in this country, which is very grave and very deeply to be lamented. But the offences of Mr. P. O'Brien and Mr. Hayden

are not to be classed as infamous crimes or disgraceful crimes, that carry with them the detestation and abhorrence of mankind."

That is the common-sense view of the matter, and ought to commend itself to every other judge who deals with these cases. Why is it that the Resident Magistrates have not followed in every case which has come before them the suggestion of the County Court Judges, but have instead sentenced these offenders to be treated as common criminals? I have no doubt that the cause is the Chief Secretary. I hold the right hon. Gentleman directly responsible for the action of the Resident Magistrates in convicting these men, and in sentencing them as common criminals. I have no doubt that it was the language used by the right hon. Gentleman in and out of the House, and the utterances of his Chief (Lord Salisbury) on the public platform that gave the cue to the Resident Magistrates to impose sentences in this way. The right hon. Gentleman has never risen to speak without justifying the treatment of these hon. Members as common criminals. That has been the uniform practice. He has said two or three times in this House that nothing would induce him for a moment to consent to those men being treated differently to common criminals under the ordinary law.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): My statement was that I would never consent, on my own authority, to modify a sentence passed on an hon. Member by a competent tribunal

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I will undertake to look up cases. Lord Salisbury has also justified the treatment of political prisoners as common criminals, and the noble Lord is answerable, in my opinion, to a large extent for the action of the Resident Magistrates. Lord Salisbury gibed and scoffed at the Irish Members in prison, and declared that he considered their conduct worse than that of criminals who had been sent to prison for thieving and offences of that kind, and the noble Lord also spoke of the effeminate and maudlin doctrine with respect to political prisoners.

Mr. Shaw-Lefevre

The right hon. Gentleman was still speaking at 5.30 when, by the rules of the House, the debate stood adjourned.

MOTIONS.

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PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Howell, Bill to consolidate, simplify, and amend the Law relating to Parliamentary Elections; and for other purposes relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Howell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Fenwick, Dr. Hunter, Mr. Warmington, and Mr. Bowen Rowlands.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 131.]

ALLOTMENTS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Major Rasch, Bill to amend "The Allotments Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Major Rasch and Mr. Story-Maskelyne.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 132.]

METROPOLITAN MARKETS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sydney Buxton, Bill to enable the London County Council to establish Markets, and to acquire existing Market rights, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Causton, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howell, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Montagu, Mr. Octavius V. Morgan, Mr. James Rowlands, and Mr. James Stuart.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 133.]

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (LONDON) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Robert Reid, Bill to facilitate the better Housing of the Working Classes in London, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Broadhurst, and Mr. Sydney Buxton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 134.]

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do

classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed:—And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to require it:—And that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of—Sir Charles Forster, Mr. William Lowther, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Hugh Elliot, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Mulholland, Viscount Lymington, Mr. Wiggin, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Mr. Hanbury-Tracy, Sir Robert Fowler, and Mr. Justin Huntly M'Carthy.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(Sir Charles Forster).

PERSONAL PROPERTY EXEMPTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill to provide for the exemption of Personal Property (to a limited amount) from seizure or sale under legal process, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Picton, and Mr. M'Ewan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 135.]

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION—QUESTIONS.

On the question that the House do now adjourn,

MR. T. HEALY (Longford, N.): I wish to ask the Home Secretary whether he can give any further information as to Mr. Pigott?

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I also wish to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman. Immediately before the rising of the House yesterday, the Home Secretary, in answer to the hon. and learned Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton), said that the warrant issued by the Commission Court was not brought to Scotland Yard by Messrs. Lewis till a quarter-past six o'clock; that therefore, until that hour, the police could not possibly take any steps for the arrest of Mr. Pigott; and that immediately the warrant was received every step that was possible was taken by telegraphing to the ports and by employing persons to watch at all railway stations. That statement had relation only to the warrant issued by the Judge, under which no proceeding for extradition could be founded. I therefore ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was aware, when he made that statement, that informations for perjury against Mr. Pigott were sworn at Bow Street yesterday by Mr. Parnell, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Labouchere, and Mr. Campbell, and that a few minutes before four o'clock Mr. Vaughan issued a warrant against Mr. Pigott for perjury, and that instantly that warrant was put into the hands of an Inspector of the Metropolitan Police; and will the right hon. Gentleman endeavour to reconcile his statement with those facts? I also ask whether, yesterday or last night the Government took any step to communicate with their agents in France, or in other parts of the Continent, or adopted any measures to secure the arrest of Mr. Pigott outside of the United Kingdom? I ask, further, whether any steps have been taken to obtain the extradition of Mr. Pigott, and, pending his extradition, to fix his whereabouts and watch his movements?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): When I made the statement at the rising of the House last night, I was only aware of the warrant which had reached Scotland Yard at the time I named, and was not aware that the Bow Street warrant had been issued. It is quite true that between half-past four and five o'clock yesterday

a warrant—I think for forgery, which I believe to be an extraditable offence—was issued from Bow Street police-court by Mr. Vaughan. It was given to the inspector on duty at the court, and was instantly acted on by him, in the ordinary course, without communicating with head-quarters. It had not, therefore, reached Scotland Yard at the time I spoke last night, and I knew nothing of it. As to telegraphic communication with France, I have already stated that telegrams were last night addressed to all the agents of the police, not only in France, but to all foreign stations, as to Mr. Pigott's whereabouts. As to the steps which have been taken to-day, I have received no information in addition to what I stated this morning—namely, that the ordinary steps have been taken at the Home Office, and that the Home Office officials have been themselves in communication with the Foreign Office in order to obtain extradition from the French Government.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether, pending the possible extradition of Pigott, steps are being taken to fix his whereabouts and to keep him in view.

MR. MATTHEWS; I think the right hon. Gentleman will see that I had better not go into that subject. The police are taking the usual course. I may say that my impression is that forgery is extraditable, but not perjury.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman said perjury was an extraditable offence?

MR. MATTHEWS: My impression is that forgery is an extraditable offence, but not perjury.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): In the absence of the Attorney General, I beg to ask the Solicitor General whether he is aware that the *Times* is still selling its pamphlets called "Parnellism and Crime," and how long after what is called the apology of this morning it is going to disseminate these forgeries?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): I have no information whatever with regard to that subject.

MR. T. HEALY: I ask your permission, Mr. Speaker, to give notice that to-morrow, if the Government can give us no information with regard to Pigott, I will ask Her Majesty's Postmaster-General at what hour the telegrams were sent out from Scotland Yard last night.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. CAREW, M.P.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I wish to ask a Question on another subject. As an action for alleged slander has been brought by a Resident Magistrate against Mr. Carew, who is now in prison at Kilkenny, and as an application has been made to the Prisons Board for his removal to Dublin Prison to enable him to consult his legal adviser, which application has been refused, I wish to ask whether the Government will give directions to the Prisons Board to comply with that reasonable request, so as to prevent the public from concluding that it is intended to load the dice against Mr. Carew in the Civil Courts?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I will inquire into the matter at once, and see how it stands.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 6.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 8.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 28th February, 1889.

LAND TRANSFER BILL.—(No 8.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said: My Lords, as I explained to your Lordships in moving the first reading of this Bill, it is the same Bill as that which was referred to a Select Committee last Session, and proceeded with down to Section 54. I now ask your Lordships to read the Bill a second time, in order that it may be referred back to the Select Committee.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, your Lordships are probably aware from the newspapers that the Lord Chancellor on the 1st of January issued new Rules for the registration of land under Lord Cairns's Act of 1875, and for this purpose made use of the Ordnance maps. I have been to the office of the Land Registry, and I learn that the new Rules are working well, and that a very fair amount of business has been done considering the short time that has passed since the new Rules were issued. The Ordnance maps for the whole of England are not yet published, but I have been informed that, notwithstanding this, the head of the Ordnance Survey is prepared to give maps for any place for which registration is required. I hope that under the circumstances the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack will give sufficient time for this experiment to work, and for its effects to be observed; and that he will not, except in case of sales, insist upon compulsory registration, which would be very burdensome to all, and especially to those owners who had no occasion to deal with their property, or no intention of selling it.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and referred to a Select Committee.

LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 9.)

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY): My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I need trouble the House with only a few observations. The Bill was passed in your Lordships' House in 1883, in 1886, in 1887, and again in last year. It is unnecessary, therefore, for me on this occasion to discuss the main provisions of the measure. There appears to be some matters upon which there is a difference of opinion; but your Lordships will no doubt feel that those matters will be better discussed when we are in Committee on the Bill. My Lords, I move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly.

REFORM OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

*THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in rising to ask whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to submit to Parliament any measure for restraining unworthy Members of their Lordships' House from voting or taking part in its proceedings, said: My Lords, it will be in the recollection of your Lordships that the noble and learned Lord at the head of Her Majesty's Government last year introduced two Bills dealing with this subject. The first Bill was mainly concerned in giving the Crown a power to appoint Life Peers. It would be a stretch of imagination to say that that Bill met with any very enthusiastic welcome from your Lordships; and, though my noble Friend introduced the Bill, I doubt whether he was himself a very keen supporter of it. However, that Bill has passed away, and I do not propose on this occasion to disturb its rest. There was a second Bill, and, in my opinion, a more valuable one which accompanied it, which I might briefly express by saying that it was a measure intended for the purification of this House. My Lords, the object of that Bill, I think, was a very valuable one. My noble Friend will do me the justice to remember that for years past I have always desired to see some such Bill introduced, and though I am not quite clear that the machinery proposed by that Bill was all that could have been desired, yet the object of it was one upon which I think there was no difference of opinion expressed in this House, and one in which I certainly fully and entirely concur. Your Lordships will remember that it was late in the Session: that we had a considerable debate in this House, and many important speeches were made, and the Bill, I think, passed through the second reading, and was sent to Committee, and the expectations about it were sanguine. At that moment my noble Friend got up and announced that my right honourable Friend Mr. Smith in another place had, in accomplishing that which is euphemistically called "the massacre of the innocents," consigned these two Bills to destruction. My Lords, the House broke up, there was a dissolving view, and the Bills themselves absolutely vanished from sight. The question that I have to ask my noble Friend is this: whether he is prepared either to revise the second of those two Bills for the purification of this House, or to introduce something similar? I earnestly hope that my noble Friend will be able to give an affirmative answer to my Question. My Lords, it is impossible not to feel that some such measure is necessary. There are, unfortunately, cases which I need not specify, because most of them are notorious. There are cases in which old and honoured names have been dragged through the mud, and in which it has been openly stated out of doors that the holders of those names and titles were unworthy to sit here. My Lords, there may be, and there often is, in these cases a good deal of exaggeration. The numbers are comparatively few. It is not wonderful that there should be, out of so large a number as those who fill this House—nearly 600—some who are untrue to the traditions of their family, or to the names that they bear, but it is not the less fatally injurious, because the statements concerning them are taken up, repeated and exaggerated, and the effect which is produced all through the country is one which re-acts not only upon this House, but all the great institutions of the land. And, my Lords, in a certain sense, that is an opinion which I hold to be entirely right. I believe that there is no one of your Lordships whom I am now addressing who does not agree with me in the necessity of purging this House from such unworthy Members. I am quite certain that there is not one dissentient out of doors. Your Lordships will remember that we are charged with legislative functions. It is absolutely inconceivable that men whose characters are tainted should, by hereditary right, be empowered to make laws and determine the policy of the country. There are certain cases in this world where public and private character are so bound up with each other that it is impossible to separate them, and I venture to say that in the case of this House the private character of individual Members becomes to all intents and purposes public property. My Lords, it is on this foundation that this House really stands. Take that away and it

is nothing but a baseless fabric. We are perfectly right in discussing as we did the other night what should be the quorum, what the attendance, what the best rules for the despatch of public business: all these things are, doubtless, of great public utility. But, after all, the real stay and pillar of this House is the character of its individual Members, and those who legislate and those who are empowered here to pronounce authoritatively upon public policy should, like Cæsar's wife, be above all cavil and suspicion. Therefore, I say that your Lordships would be perfectly right in framing, so far as we are concerned, the severest possible rules by which we may both hold our seats and take part in public proceedings. My Lords, it may be perfectly well said that there are Gentlemen of a very questionable character in the other House of Parliament. It is perfectly true; but, at the same time, you must remember that the House of Commons is an elective body, and that creates a very great distinction, and we must leave the House and the constituents who send up an unworthy Member to settle the matter between themselves. They have had to do this before now, and they may have to do it again. It is probably necessary, I apprehend, to adopt the course which the Government thought fit to adopt last year, and to introduce a Bill upon the subject. It would be a matter of high Constitutional law whether we could meet the difficulty by our own powers; I assume that it is necessary to introduce a Bill. Statutory power is probably needed either to remove or to suspend from his functions in this House an unworthy Peer; but, anyhow, it would be necessary for your Lordships to supplement such a measure by machinery within the House. The Bill of last year, as far as I remember, did not provide that machinery, but I assume that the Government would have made some recommendations upon that subject had the Bill passed. Now I have heard it also said, sometimes, that there should be precedent for this. My Lords, I hold that where a great evil exists, as undoubtedly does exist here, an evil not to be measured by the mere numbers of the delinquents, it would be desirable to make a precedent if no precedent existed; and it does seem to me strange that there should not be some such power of censorship or of suspension inherent in any great body like this when we have seen it exercised from time immemorial—from the time of the Roman Senate down to the constitution of a London West End club. But, as a matter of fact, there is a precedent, so far as it goes, in this respect: that, by the recent Bankruptcy Act, anyone who is adjudged bankrupt is disqualified from sitting or voting in this House. It has also been said that it will be very difficult to specify with sufficient clearness the particular offences for which it is desired to invoke this power of removal or suspension. I confess I do not follow that objection at all. I see no reason whatever why you should define and specify the offence so closely. The Bill of last year did not do so. It very wisely avoided that mistake. After all, it is for your Lordships to remember that in the Army and in the Navy conduct unbefitting a gentleman and an officer is thought ample, and more than ample, to bring down punishment on the offender's head. I venture to think that that which serves the Army and Navy may serve us in this case. My Lords, I do not desire on this occasion to argue this matter any further. What I have said has been with a view of impressing upon my noble Friend at the head of Her Majesty's Government the extreme importance which I, and I believe many of your Lordships, attach, and which certainly is attached out of doors, to the purifying of this House from those few, but still notorious, offenders who detract from its weight and authority as a public institution. I am confident that it can be accomplished, and that it can be accomplished with justice to the individual, with satisfaction to the public, and with credit also to this House.

*EARL COWPER: My Lords, I do not know whether I shall be considered very singular when I ask your Lordships clearly to say whether you think that it is necessary to legislate on this particular point at all. No one has complained with regard to our black sheep that they are common at all, that they put themselves very much forward, that they bleat very loudly, or that they really make themselves objectionable in any way in this House. That being the case and it being our invariable custom in this country not

to legislate for imaginary evils, but only to take action when there is a real grievance to remedy, I would ask whether sufficient case has been made out for legislation upon this matter or for proceeding by a Resolution? This House is not a new institution. It has existed for many hundreds of years, and I think we have got on very well until now without anything of this sort being done. I think that we may perhaps be aided rather by history. Two or three generations ago there were at least as many disreputable characters belonging to this House as there are now, but it was never thought necessary to take means for preventing them taking their seats. A great many charges have been made by the public against this House, but I do not think want of respectability is one of them. We have been very unjustly found fault with in many respects. Our wisdom, our energy, our freedom from prejudice, and our power of adapting ourselves to the spirit of the age—all these qualities have been, I think, very unjustly impugned at different times; but I do not think our respectability has ever been questioned. For these reasons, I venture to think, it is quite unnecessary to legislate in this matter. Then, my Lords, consider the practical difficulty. It is not at all easy to make out who ought to be excluded. My noble Friend alluded to bankrupts. Well, there are very often cases in which the bankruptcy is more the misfortune than the fault of the unfortunate bankrupt. If you look back to former days you will find that some of the greatest historical men—some of the greatest statesmen, like Pitt, and Fox, and Sheridan, and others—were always on the verge of bankruptcy, and were only saved from it by the munificence of their friends. Again, I suppose the noble Earl would exclude Peers from this House who had been the subject of an adverse verdict in a Court of Justice. Now, will the noble Earl consider the Jockey Club a Court of Justice for that purpose? Remember that many men have been before the Courts and been convicted for no very great fault, and for something that does not necessarily stigmatize them for the rest of their lives, and in the same way many men who have never been before the Courts at all are great scoundrels and unworthy to sit in any respectable assembly. If you take Courts of Justice as a criterion, will you apply the principle to spiritual Lords as well as temporal? For instance, if a Bishop is convicted of a ritualistic offence, will he be debarred for ever from sitting in this House? I do not think my noble Friend who brought forwardt his question will quite approve of that. My Lords, the more I consider this matter the more I cannot help thinking that it will be much better to leave it where it is.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, if the question before your Lordships' House was the effect upon this House of those few Members of it whom the noble Lord described as "black sheep," I should say that the remarks of the noble Earl who has just sat down were very pertinent, but as the question before your Lordships is, as pointed out by my noble Friend below (Lord Carnarvon), the effect upon the public generally of the fact that some Members of this House might be called unworthy Members of the Legislature, I cannot see that the arguments of the noble Lord are very much to the point. I cannot at all agree with the noble Earl that the objections which are sometimes raised in the country to this House, among them the fact that this House contains these unworthy Members, be they few or many, are of no importance. The objections that are made to this House in the country generally consist of two. First of all, that great divisions are often taken by Members of this House who very seldom participate in the debates, and who very seldom attend the House. The second is that there are some Members of this House, who may possibly influence by their votes the whole destinies of the people, who are certainly not persons who would be elected to this or to any other Legislative Assembly. I sincerely trust that the noble Marquess the Prime Minister will re-introduce the Bill of last Session, or introduce some Bill of a similar kind. I frankly admit that the question is full of difficulty. Difficulties have been pointed out by noble Lords opposite. The noble Earl who spoke last pointed out for instance the matter of bankruptcy; and I quite agree with him that that would be a difficult matter to deal with, al-

though I am happy to think that the acquaintance of the noble Earl with bankruptcy appears to be a very limited one, because the noble Earl, apparently, saw no difference between being on the verge of bankruptcy, and being a bankrupt; but I should think that the difference to the individual concerned would be very great indeed. If the Crown has power given it to cancel a writ, or not to issue a writ, I presume that power would only be set in motion by a Resolution of the House or by some means of that kind, and that some tribunal would be appointed by the House in order to advise the House in the matter. I do not think it would be very difficult to purge the House of these unworthy Members by any statutory measure that may be brought in. Last Session I had the honour of introducing a Bill dealing with the Reform of the Constitution of this House by your Lordships, a Bill that I am bound to say, for, flatter myself as I may, met with very little approbation from any quarter of this House. At the same time without arrogance, I think, I may say that I believe that time will somewhat soften your Lordships' views towards that Bill, because I do believe that people in this country are very much in favour of real and large reforms of this House, and I believe that when your Lordships have made up your minds that such is the case, this House will undertake its own reform; and I venture to think that when this House seriously entertains such matters, the measure which will be introduced will be found to proceed very much on the lines of the Bill which I had the honour to introduce. I can only say that it would be difficult to deal with this subject in any other way than that which I suggested last Session, namely—by delegation or selection. It would be impossible to put upon any Committee of this House, or any individual Member of the House, the disagreeable and invidious task of saying that certain Peers were unworthy to take part in the proceedings of the House. It seems to me the only way in which the difficulty can be got over is by the House appointing a certain number of its members to deal with the matter. But be that as it may, as there is no likelihood whatever of anything of the kind that I have mentioned being accepted by the House, I sincerely trust that Her Majesty's Government will not undervalue the evil that now exists, and that some measure will be introduced dealing with the subject.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, there is an offence which has not been mentioned by the noble Earl who spoke last but one (Earl Cowper) that is, when a man joins a political party, or a Government, and then, for popularity-hunting or self-seeking, abandons it and causes it great embarrassment; in short, how many times may a man rat and not be an unworthy Member of the House?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: From what was said by the noble Earl who opened this debate, one might imagine that this House is in a very much more serious condition morally than it actually is. The noble Earl spoke of a great evil, and of the necessity of correcting it, and he used words of solemn warning, which rather reminded me of the attempts of Cromwell to purge his Legislative Assemblies, or of the kind of denunciation the leaders of the Mountain were accustomed to address to their followers. I do not think this House is so largely composed of reprobate members as the noble Lord seems to think.

*THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I beg my noble Friend's pardon; but I particularly stated that the evil was not to be measured by the number of individuals who were charged.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Still I suppose there is some relation between the denunciations and the extent of the evil. I think if we discuss the existence of black sheep at all, it would be desirable that some bold person should move that a sort of list should be laid on the Table, and if a return were moved of Peers who have committed any legal offence within the last five years, my impression is that the return would be *nil*. If it is not legal offences that are contemplated, what other offences would you put in? I am not averse to giving a censorial power to the House, such as was proposed by the measure of last year; but I do most earnestly protest against its being concluded from the proposal of such legislation that there is anything that can be called a material grievance or that the House contains

any large number of persons of whose companionship and co-operation we ought to be ashamed. I may be wrong; but if anyone thinks there are these black sheep, I only ask that he will be good enough to name them. Having entered my protest against what I consider to be the highly-coloured statement of my noble Friend, I would say I think it would be well if this House were armed with the particular power possessed by the House of Commons and which is not possessed by your Lordships. I think this is an anomaly; and I should like to see this House vested with some power analogous to the power of expulsion possessed by the other House. As to the question whether we are prepared to make a change by legislation, there are considerations applying of a practical and material character. I do not think it is desirable we should pass a measure through this House unless there is some probability of its being placed upon the Statute Book. My noble Friend referred to the fate of the Bills of last year. There was a slight imperfection in the historical statement that he gave us. No doubt the Bills were abandoned by my right hon. Friend in the other House with considerable precipitation; but the noble Earl did not mention the terrible prospect before which my right hon. Friend's nerves gave way. Mr. Gladstone was pleased to do what is not very commonly done—namely, to discuss beforehand Bills which were not before the House of Commons at the time he was speaking. He divided the Bills for the reform of the House of Lords into two categories; they might either be so small as to be frivolous, and therefore unworthy of the attention of the House of Commons; or they might be so large as to require the virgin energies of that House at a period of the year when its virgin energies were still unexhausted. With that dilemma before him, and after the intimation of the way in which Mr. Gladstone's powers would be used, I was not surprised that my right hon. Friend said that these Bills would not be proceeded with. That announcement of the Leader of the Opposition in the other House makes me disinclined to think that the present is an opportune moment for proceeding with Bills of that kind. As far as I can judge from the mode in which matters are proceeding and are likely to proceed in the other House of Parliament, there is already before Parliament, foreshadowed by the Queen's Speech, as much work as it is likely to get through; and I fear that if we encumbered the Order Book with additional measures over and above those which perhaps are called for by the necessities of the moment, or which we have been pledged to by repeatedly bringing forward before, we should only find at the end of the Session that it would be impossible to proceed with such a Bill and that it would have to be put aside again. As I have ventured to lay before the House, and as used to be very much insisted upon by my lamented Friend, Lord Cairns, it is almost a condition precedent of any legislation for the constitution of the House that there should be a fair prospect of its passing into law in the same year in which it is introduced. The constitution of this House ought not to be the subject of Bills accepted here and put aside from year to year by the other House of Parliament. I can only say that if the appearance of matters should be changed, if business should go through with unexpected rapidity, if there should appear to be such a desire for this legislation as to render it likely that the measure would succeed, I shall be ready to introduce not only one but both of the Bills (I do not suppose my noble Friend will be very pleased with the promise as regards one of them) which were introduced last year; but at present I do not see any prospect which would induce the Government to undertake the proposal of such legislation. At the same time, if my noble Friend is disposed to introduce a Bill himself, I can only say that the Government, and I am sure all your Lordships, will give it the most careful and anxious consideration, because we are very anxious to remove even the shadow of such a stigma as that which is thought by the noble Lord to rest upon the House. But I earnestly hope that it will not be concluded from this debate that we admit that there is any such special failure or fault in this House as would justify the alarming language used by my noble Friend.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, it is with some disappointment that I have heard the statement of the

noble Marquess. I concur with him in thinking that the number of black sheep in this House may very easily be over-estimated. The point is not exactly as he has put it. It is not the point of how many Members of this House have committed offences which have rendered them amenable to the law in the last five years. It is rather a question of how many Members of the House have committed such offences as render them unworthy to legislate in this House. My noble Friend the noble Earl who sits at the Table (Earl Cowper) made a very amusing speech in opposition to the whole proposition. He said that a number of our great statesmen had been on the verge of bankruptcy, and he said that one hundred years ago we had quite as many disreputable Peers in this House as we have at present. Well, as regards the instances of Pitt and Fox, they are not entirely applicable. We had the brothers of Pitt and Fox in this House, and they were both men, if not of stupendous wealth, at any rate of perfect solvency. But as regards the question of how many Peers there are in this House who would be liable to be included in the Return suggested by the noble Marquess, that strikes me as being beside the point. The force of public opinion beats more fiercely on this House than it did in those days. Not merely that, but we have to recollect that in those days many Members of this House practically owned as their property a considerable number of seats in the other House. All that is very greatly changed. Owing to the action of both Parties in the State, we have formed the Constitution, or enlarged the Constitution, on a basis which is essentially Democratic. Under the circumstances, I think we might very well take steps to guard against the possibility of unworthy Peers (if there be any such) being enabled to come and sit in this House and legislate on equal terms with other noble Lords. That I take to be the meaning of the noble Earl opposite. My Lords, under these circumstances I regret that the head of a powerful Government does not see his way to legislate in this direction. I can hardly believe that the Bills which the noble Marquess introduced in the middle of June last year, with a sanguine hope of being able to pass them through both Houses of Parliament, he is unable with any expectation of success to get through Parliament if introduced in the month of March. It is quite true that the noble Marquess throws the blame of that, as he does of some other things, on my honoured Leader in the other House of Parliament; but I do not think that the objections raised by Mr. Gladstone were fatal to the Bills of the noble Marquess. Mr. Gladstone said that if the Bills were of a long character they would require the virgin attention of Parliament, and if they were of a very slight character he did not intimate his desire to meet them with any determined opposition.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I cannot imagine Mr. Gladstone ever entertaining anything frivolous.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I am quite sure that Mr. Gladstone would not entertain anything frivolous. But Mr. Gladstone is not the supreme arbiter of the House of Commons. The Gentleman who does represent the supreme power in the House of Commons holds very sanguine views in the matter. In the speech with which the noble Marquess introduced this Bill he assured us that Mr. Smith, who I am sure would also be incapable of entertaining any frivolous views, had declared that he was sanguine of being able to carry these measures through the House of Commons. My Lords, it is quite true that the parricidal hand of Mr. Smith was afterwards applied to these measures when they came on for discussion, but I cannot think that it is a position worthy of the noble Marquess, or of the Government over which he so ably presides, to say that he is unable to get through the House of Commons a Bill of which the purpose must be absolutely unexceptionable, because of the implied or threatened opposition of the Leader of a minority. Well, my Lords, I regret it. I do not know whether the noble Earl will accept the invitation and frame a measure of his own; but I would like before I sit down to shed one tear over the measure for the creation of life peerages, and to ask, are we never to hear of that measure again? There was a flickering expression of opinion from the noble Marquess that if a Bill excluding the black sheep were introduced into this House by any private person, it might

receive his countenance and support; but, as to the Life Peers Bill—that Bill which was to effect the introduction into this House of men who would enrich the House and would strengthen it in such a manner that it would be in accord with democratic principles—of that Bill we hear no more. I confess that I felt no very great enthusiasm for it; but let me act the part of a very sincere mourner over the fate of that Bill.

*THE MARQUESS OF BATH: My Lords, I do not think the general feeling of the House would be against some cautious measure which should ensure the exclusion from the House of all those whose presence in any way tends to derogate from its character and dignity. If the noble Marquess would introduce a short Bill to declare that any Peer who had been convicted on the evidence of two reliable witnesses before either a Police Magistrate or at any Sessions of having been twice in one year at a race meeting or of having been the owner of race horses should be incapacitated from setting in the House of Lords, I think the object my noble Friends have in view would be accomplished.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Would the noble Lord make that proposal retrospective?

*THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I am sorry that my noble Friend feels that there are difficulties in the way of his introduction of this measure. At the same time, he says that he will not oppose any Bill introduced by me. I do not think that any individual Member on such a question as this, stands upon a footing of equal advantage with the Government. It is a matter mainly, if not essentially, for a Government to undertake; but looking, as I do, upon this as a very serious evil, an evil, as I said before, not to be measured by the mere number of the individuals against whom complaint may be made, I think I should be wrong if I did not accept the invitation which he has given me, and if I did not at all events satisfy my conscience by laying a very short measure upon your Lordships' table. I shall endeavour to do so; and your Lordships may depend upon it that it will be of the very briefest character, for I believe the evil, such as it is, can be met by very brief legislation; and I rely with absolute confidence upon the support which my noble Friend has promised me in carrying that Bill through.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

The Lords following—namely,

E. Lathom (Ld. Chamberlain)	L. Boyle (E. Cork and Orrery)
E. Morley	L. Colville of Culross

with the Chairman of Committees, were appointed a Committee to select and propose to the House the names of the five Lords to form a Select Committee for the consideration of each opposed Private Bill.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS AND OFFICE OF THE GENTLEMAN USHER OF THE BLACK ROD.

Selected Committee appointed: The Lords following, with the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee—

D. Richmond	E. Granville
D. Saint Albans	E. Kimberley
D. Bedford	E. Sydney
M. Salisbury	E. de Montalt
M. Bath	V. Hardinge
E. Mount Edgcumbe (Ld. Steward)	V. Oxenbridge
E. Lathom (Ld. Chamberlain)	L. Willoughby Eresby
E. Jersey	L. Boyle (E. Cork and Orrery)
E. Carnarvon	L. Foxford (E. Limerick)
E. Belmore	L. Colchester
E. Harrowby	L. Kerr (M. Lothian)
E. Bradford	L. Colville of Culross
E. Beauchamp	
E. Camperdown	

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 28th February, 1889.

INCREASE OF DEFECTIVE VISION.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been directed to statements recently made by responsible authorities, to the effect that short sight and other forms of defective vision are rapidly increasing in England; and, whether, to test the accuracy of these statements, he will direct the inspection of the children of some one Board School by a competent ophthalmic surgeon?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): Statements such as those referred to were, I believe, recently made in the newspapers, and the Department are quite alive to the importance of the question, and the attention of their Inspectors will be specially directed to testing the accuracy of the alleged facts. I may add that in criticizing the plans of schools special care is taken by the Department to secure enough light, and that it shall fall in the right direction. A Royal Commission has been engaged in taking important evidence, and will shortly report upon the subject.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I beg to give notice that I will call attention to this subject on the earliest opportunity, and will move that a medical inspection of the elementary schools is required, in order to prevent an interference with the present system of compulsory education.

FACTORY ACCIDENTS.

MR. HENRY WILSON (Yorkshire, W. R., Holmfirth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that on the 23rd April, 1888, a woman and a girl were killed and another girl seriously injured at New Mill, near Huddersfield, by unfenced shafting connected with a factory, but working in gardens; whether an inquest was held at the Huddersfield Infirmary, five miles from New Mill, on the 26th April; whether he is aware that although the coroner's jury could, for a shilling each, have visited New Mill, they did not inspect the shafting, nor was any plan or drawing produced at the inquest; whether he is aware that the Inspector of Factories, Mr. Prior, is reported as having stated at the inquest—

"On the 4th of August, when he last visited this mill, there was no shafting there; he then received no intimation of any intention to put up anything of the kind, nor had he since received any information of its being erected. . . . . I have visited this mill once. I have been two years and a-half in this district, and there are lots of places I have not been able to get to for the first time yet;"

whether owners of factories are responsible for accidents arising from shafting outside factories as well as inside; whether it is a fact that Mr. Prior has some 3,200 factories and workshops in his district; and whether it is usual for an Inspector to have the oversight of so large a number of factories and workshops?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Inspector of Factories that the facts are as stated in the first four paragraphs. Owners are responsible for accidents to persons employed in the factories for shafts and other machinery required by the Act to be securely fenced, either within the factory premises, or within the close or cartilage of such premises. The persons referred to in the Question were not employed in the factory, and were alleged to be trespassers at the spot where the accident happened. According to the last Return, the number of factories in this district is 1,918. It is a comparatively small district, and is conveniently situated.

MR. H. WILSON: My Question was not in reference to the last Return, but as to the present number.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no knowledge of the number except from the Return.

MR. H. WILSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiry as to the present number?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham): May I ask if the Return includes the number of workshops; and whether the Government have considered the desirability of increasing the number of Inspectors?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes; I understand that the Inspector General includes both factories and workshops. I have drawn the attention of the Treasury to the necessity of increasing the staff of Inspectors.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham): What has been the increase in the number of factory Inspectors?

MR. MATTHEWS: The increase has been two. They are not attached to any district, but their services are available wherever they are wanted.

CONSUMPTION OF LIQUOR IN INDIA.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a series of letters recently

published by the hon. Member for Barrow when travelling in India; whether he has examined the statements therein relative to the rapid increase of the consumption of intoxicants in India; whether he is aware that public opinion attributes this increase to the licensing policy adopted by the Indian Government for the sake of Revenue; whether the Government of India intends to alter their Abkari (licensing) system; whether his attention has been called to the description Mr. Caine gives of the opium dens in Lucknow; and, whether he will undertake that the Indian Government will inquire into the truth of these statements, and, if they are found to be accurate, will suppress these opium dens?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The Secretary of State has reason to believe that the most friendly communications took place between the hon. Member for Barrow and the authorities in India during his recent travels in that country, and that the valuable observations and statements contained in the letters of the hon. Member have been brought to the notice of those authorities by the hon. Member himself. The excise law and the excise administration vary in the several Provinces of India, according to the diverse circumstances of each Province, and it would be unwise, in the judgment of the Secretary of State, to attempt the imposition on the local Governments of one rigid system for the whole of India. The policy, however, which is uniformly inculcated on the Governments both by the Secretary of State and the Government of India is to make the repression of intoxication and of the use of deleterious drugs the first object of their excise legislation and administration, and to treat the raising of revenue as a purely secondary object. To this policy the Secretary of State has reason to believe that all the local Governments in India are using their best efforts to give effect, and they will, no doubt, derive material assistance from the researches of the hon. Member.

THE CARDIFF SAVINGS BANK.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can inform the House what has been done, and is being done, to insure the repayment to the depositors in the Cardiff Trustee Savings Bank of the moneys lost by them through the frauds of the late actuary and the negligence of the trustees and managers, as reported to this House in December 1887 by the Commissioner appointed to inquire into this case?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Member will recollect that, upon the Report of the Commissioners appointed by the Treasury to inquire into the failure of the Cardiff Savings Bank, the National Debt Commissioners applied to the High Court for an order to have the affairs of the bank wound up under the Companies Act. This order was made, and a liquidator appointed. In winding up the affairs of the bank, the liquidator, who is going most fully into all the details, is acting under the direction of the Court, and the Government cannot give directions to him as to the course he is to pursue, which it is for the Court alone to decide.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as a period of three years has now elapsed since the failure of the bank, it is not desirable that steps should be taken to repay the depositors?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I have done my utmost to push the matter forward, and such influence as is in the power of the Treasury will be exercised. We have no power, however, to expedite the certificates of the Commissioner.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

MR. HOWELL asked the Postmaster General whether Trade Societies and branches of Trade Unions have for many years been allowed to deposit their funds without limit in the Post Office Savings Banks, in the same way as Friendly Societies; and, whether any Trade Union or branch of a Union has recently been refused this privilege; and, if so, whether he will state upon whose authority such refusal has been made?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The facts as stated in the Question of the hon. Member are substantially correct; but I am in communication with

the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, with a view to getting over certain difficulties in connection with the three recent applications which are alluded to in the Question.

BECHUANALAND.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has yet been informed as to the result of the investigation commenced at the end of December last, at the Limpopo in Bechuanaland, by Her Majesty's Deputy Commissioner in South Africa, as to the collision in that neighbourhood in the previous August between a Boer named Grobbelaar, said to be a Consul accredited by the Transvaal Government, and messengers of the Chief Khama; and when the Government will be able to present to Parliament correspondence respecting this and other proceedings in the Bechuanaland Protectorate subsequent to last August?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron HENRY DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government have received Sir Sydney Shippard's Report on the subject; but the correspondence is not yet complete. When it is it will be presented to Parliament with other papers relating to Bechuanaland which are now partly in type.

SIR R. FOWLER: How long will it be before the correspondence is presented?

BARON H. DE WORMS: At present I am unable to say exactly.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Is it not the case that a Report was received during last Session of Parliament, and that when I asked a Question in reference to it a promise was made that it should be printed and circulated?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I will make inquiry about it.

POST OFFICE STATIONERY.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is in a position to inform the House what is the nature of the concessions that De La Rue and Company are prepared to make in the proposed new contract for Post Office stationery, &c.; and, whether he will undertake to invite tenders, and give others an opportunity of competing for the supply of Post Office stationery, stamps, &c., without delay, in view of the fact that extensive outlay and preparations will be necessary for the special work required to be undertaken in 1890, when the present contracts will expire?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I have to state that the concessions offered by Messrs. De La Rue amount to a considerable sum; but they are conditional on a prolongation of the period of the contract. I am now considering whether the advantages offered compensate for such a prolongation, involving as it does the absence of public competition. I have caused searching inquiry to be made as to whether the revised prices offered by Messrs. De La Rue are as favourable as those which would be likely to be obtained under open competition, and I hope shortly to be able to announce my decision.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): What terms have been given to Messrs. De La Rue and Company?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: A term of eight years after the two years during which the Contract has now to run.

POSTAGE OF LETTERS ABROAD.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON asked the Postmaster General whether he is aware that the cost of posting a letter from France, Germany, or Russia to British India is only 2½*d*., while the charge from the United Kingdom is 5*d*.; whether he is aware that many British merchants and newspaper proprietors in London post a large quantity of letters in France for India and China, thereby saving nearly 50 per cent in the cost for postage; and whether India is in the Postal Union?

MR. RAIKES: I am well aware, as is also the House, and, I think, the public generally, that the facts are as stated in the hon. Member's first Question, and I may remind the hon. Member that the circumstances under which this difference of charge arises have been already explained in this House, I think, more than once. As regards the second point, I am not aware that any practice prevails on the part of British merchants and newspaper proprietors of sending letters to

France to be there posted for India and China. On the contrary, from inquiries recently made, I have reason to believe that such is not the case. But I understand that newspapers are posted in the manner described, although, I am glad to say, not to the detriment of the British Revenue, as my Department rather gains than loses by the arrangement. India is in the Postal Union.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Arising out of the Question, is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is a firm in Cornhill which saves £300 a year by posting newspapers for India and China in France?

MR. RAIKES: I have heard that statement, but do not know what is the authority for it.

THE CASE OF HECTOR MACKENZIE.

DR. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the man Hector Mackenzie, now lying in Inverness Gaol under sentence of death for a murder at Fort George, has always been looked on by his acquaintances as an imbecile; and, whether he was discharged from the Army as such, as also that his father and two uncles were of weak intellect?

THE LORD ADVOCATE: This case has received the careful consideration of the Secretary for Scotland. An investigation has been made, with the result that the Secretary for Scotland has felt himself justified in recommending Her Majesty to commute the sentence of death to one of penal servitude.

POST OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS AT STOWMARKET.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Postmaster General if any further arrangements have been made as to the contemplated Post Office alterations at Stowmarket; and, if so, what; and when will they be carried into effect?

MR. RAIKES: A definite proposal will be submitted shortly.

THE LONDON BRIGADES OF VOLUNTEERS.

MR. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the Volunteer Regiments of the London Brigades were invited to join Brigade Camps, under their Brigadiers, for four days, at Easter; and, whether their Commanding Officers have been directed to reduce the number of the men attending below the numbers sent in; and, if so, on what ground?

MR. E. STANHOPE: It is the case that the Volunteer regiments of the London brigades have been invited to join brigade camps, it being held by the military authorities that it is advisable to exercise Volunteer regiments with the brigades to which they belong. As a similar effort will be made in the case of all Volunteer brigades, a limit as to the numbers drawing camp allowance has had to be fixed, but this will not prevent any number from being present without the allowance where barrack accommodation is available. The allowance in proportion to the number of days is somewhat higher than in the case of regimental camps, and an increased sum has been taken in the Estimates for the year.

THE COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he intends this Session to make any Provisional Orders for transferring, under section 10 of "The Local Government Act, 1888," powers of certain Government Departments and other authorities to the County Councils of England and Wales; and, if so, whether such Provisional Orders will be submitted to Parliament at an early date?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is intended to make a Provisional Order for transferring certain powers of Government Departments to the County Councils of England and Wales, and I hope to submit the Order to Parliament at an early date. It is not proposed by the Order to deal with the powers of any other authorities.

THE SALT DUTY IN INDIA.

MR. MACNEILL asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether it is the fact that since the recent increase in the Salt Duty in India there has been a diminution in the demand for salt, to the extent of 120 million of pounds; and, whether, having regard to the fact that salt is an abso-

ute necessity of existence in India, Her Majesty's Government will take any steps to abrogate or diminish a tax which presses severely on the poorest classes of the community?

SIR J. GORST: The diminution referred to, which is about 6 per cent of the total consumption, occurred immediately after the increase of the tax. The large stock then on hand sufficiently accounts for it; and in the latter part of 1888 there was a recovery in the quantity of salt passed into consumption. The Government of India are closely watching the Returns of salt consumption, and the Secretary of State feels convinced that the earliest opportunity will be taken of abrogating the increase of the Salt Tax, to which his assent was given with so much reluctance.

THE ROYAL BARRACKS, DUBLIN.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many Boards and Committees have during the past five years investigated the sanitary condition of the Royal Barracks, Dublin; what has been the cost of these investigations; what, if any, of the measures recommended by these Boards of Inquiry have been adopted; whether his attention has been directed to a letter in the *Times*, over the signature "A Field Officer," in which the writer says that he had been a member of a Board investigating the condition of the Royal Barracks, and that it was found that the ground was saturated with poisonous matter; would he have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House this Report; and whether he would have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a Return, showing the regiments that have been quartered in the Royal Barracks, Dublin, during the past five years, and the number of each regiment including women and children, and the number of deaths in each regiment including women and children during the period of its sojourn in the Royal Barracks?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I have already said that the first Report of Mr. Rogers-Field on the Drainage of the Royal Barracks will be laid on the Table immediately. I understand that it will contain an account of the recommendations made by previous Boards, and the extent to which they have been adopted. This will meet the request contained in the first portion of the Question of the hon. Member for Donegal. I am not able to trace the Report to which reference has been made by the writer in the *Times* newspaper. The average number of troops quartered in the Royal Barracks, in addition to women and children, during the last five years has been 1,565; and the average yearly number of deaths from all causes, a little over 15, giving a death ratio of 9·18, as against 6·93, the ratio for home service generally.

MR. MAC NEILL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the end of my Question. I want to know what the cost of these investigations has been?

MR. E. STANHOPE: In regard to the cost, I am afraid I can only tell the hon. Member that one of the investigations cost 100 guineas. I am not yet able to estimate the cost of the one now taking place.

PRIVATE BILLS.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to clauses proposed to be introduced into Private Bills enabling certain Railway Companies to increase the nominal amount of their ordinary share capital without any corresponding increase in the amount actually paid up; and, whether, having regard to the provisions of 7 and 8 Vic. c. 85, and to the general question of railway rates, he will state what course he proposes to adopt with respect to such clauses?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): My attention has been directed to the matter referred to, and I am now in communication with the authorities of both Houses with the view of checking any attempts to evade the provisions, either of the earlier Act quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, or of the Act of last Session.

LOCAL GRANTS.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board up to what dates the various local grants referred to in sec-

tion 24 of the Local Government Act, 1888, will continue to be payable to local authorities; whether there is any enactment that prevents the Police Grant or any other grant being payable up to the end of the present local financial year; and, if so, whether he will ensure, by legislation or otherwise, the continuance of such grants until the County Councils become entitled to the full benefits of the local taxation licences and probate duty grant; and, if he can inform the House when the last instalments of the local grants are likely to be made, and at what periods payments may be expected to be made from the new local taxation account to the County Councils?

MR. RITCHIE: The several local grants which have been voted by Parliament in respect of the present financial year will be paid before the expiration of the year. No further Vote for such grants will again be proposed. In the coming financial year the local authorities will have ceded to them certain licence duties and a proportion of the receipts from probate duty in substitution for those grants. The local authorities will not receive in the next financial year any grants in addition to the licence duties and probate duty, which are in substitution for the grants. I am not at present in a position to say at what dates payment from the local taxation account will be made in the next financial year, but I hope to be able to arrange that payment shall be made by instalments at such times as will be convenient to the authorities.

MR. HOBHOUSE: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer more definitely the first paragraph in my Question?

MR. RITCHIE: The Government will pay the usual grants that are paid in the financial year. After the present financial year the local authorities will receive no grants at all, but will receive the licence duties, out of which they will have to meet the claims upon them.

THE GOVERNOR OF GUERNSEY.

MR. PHILIPPS (Lanark Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War the amount of the salary and allowances of the Governor of Guernsey; how much of this is contributed by Guernsey and how much by the Imperial Exchequer; and, whether the Government will undertake that the present vacancy in this post shall not be filled up till Parliament has had an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion on the necessity of the office?

MR. E. ST \NHOPE: The Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, who also commands the troops on the island and in Alderney, receives from Army funds £1,700 a year (consolidated pay) and something under £80 a year from Crown lands. I cannot undertake to abstain from filling up the post as suggested in the Question.

MR. PHILIPPS: Is the Governor provided with a house in addition to these allowances?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No.

THE COAL MINES REGULATION ACT.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to a decision given by Sheriff Orr Paterson at Ayr to the effect that the workmen employed in Knockterra Pit had no power to appoint the Secretary to the Miner's Union to make an intimation on their behalf anent the election of a check weighman, and, whether such decision is in accordance with Sections 13 and 14 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act; and, if so, what action he proposes to take in order to have this anomalous state of affairs amended?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; I have seen the decision in question, which I understand to have been to the effect that the masters were not bound to recognize the check weighman on the ground that insufficient notice of his appointment had been given. No particular form of notice is required by the Act, and I think that employers would not be justified in refusing to recognize a duly-elected check weigher, of whose election they have had sufficient notice; but I concur with the Sheriff in thinking that some sufficient notice should be given before damages can be claimed from the employer. The Sheriff has determined that question of fact, and I see no reason to take any further action in the matter.

MR. C. GRAHAM: Is there anything in the 13th and 14th sections of the Coal Mines Act that empowers the Sheriff to refuse to receive a representation made on behalf of the work-

men by a Secretary acting on their behalf?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question without notice.

THE CUSTOMS AT LIVERPOOL.

MR. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what are the hours of employment of the first and second-class (respectively) outdoor officers of the Customs at Liverpool; how many Customs officers at that port are now doing duty as "acting officers," and at what extra rate of pay; and, how many copyists are now doing at that port the work of first-class outdoor officers?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I am informed there is no distinction as to hours of employment between the first and second class of Customs outdoor officers at Liverpool, or at any other port. The hours of attendance vary according to the kind of duty on which they are employed, being from seven or eight hours a day (according to season) on warehousing stations to (at Liverpool) 12 hours out of the 24 when boarded on vessels from foreign ports; but officers on this latter duty are now usually relieved every six hours. The number of Customs officers who do duty as acting examining officers necessarily varies from day to day, according to the exigencies of the service. At Liverpool there were yesterday employed in this capacity 46 officers, and the extra rate of pay for officers approved for that service when so employed is 2d. for each hour, not exceeding 1s. a day. I am informed that no copyists are doing at Liverpool the work of outdoor officers of either class.

IRELAND—THE MURDER OF HEAD-CONSTABLE WHELEHAN.

MR. COX asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that Cullinane, the informer, swore at the preliminary investigation into the murder of Head-constable Whelehan, and again at the trial of the men charged with that crime at the Wicklow Assizes, 1887, that he had been in the pay of the police for a number of years; and, whether he is still in the employment of the Government in Ireland; and, if so, whether facilities will be given to the solicitor for the defence at the Special Commission to have a subpœna served on that person?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of the evidence given by the man referred to. I would beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply given by me a day or two ago to the inquiry repeated in the second paragraph.

MR. SEXTON: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, considering that the police were in the service of the *Times*, he will further facilitate the discovery of the truth in the inquiry before the Special Commission?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be glad to facilitate the discovery of truth in every way in my power.

MR. COX: On Monday I will put a further Question on this subject, and give this man's sworn depositions.

MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to know what number of paid informers or police spies are being kept by the Government?

No answer was given to this Question.

PRISON DISCIPLINE IN IRELAND.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the fact that four of the Barbavilla prisoners at present undergoing sentences of seven years' penal servitude in Mountjoy Prison has not been placed on the special treatment to which they became entitled in December last—namely, improved diet, less work, and visits, and letters every two months until expiration of sentences; and, if so, can he state the reason why those privileges have not been extended in their case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board informs me that the facts are not accurately represented in the question. Two of the prisoners referred to were duly approved for the special class privileges. These privileges include letters and visits every two months, but do not affect diet or work. In the case of the other two prisoners, they were disqualified under the rules for promotion to the special class, owing to misconduct.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON AND HOME RULE.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant

whether his attention has been called to the following language, reported as having been used by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson)—

"As to a Home Rule Parliament, nothing under Heaven will make us recognize the Parliament, or obey its laws, so long as we have right arms to strike with. The very moment there is a chance of a Home Rule Parliament, we should arm, we should drill, and in a fortnight we could put 50,000 men in the field under arms. I have the authority of leading men in the Army that they would never allow British soldiers to be used against the Irish Loyalists;"

and whether he intends to institute any prosecution against the hon. and gallant Member for the use of such language? Perhaps I may make to that Question an addendum intimately connected with it—namely, whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman has been called to the fact that since the appearance of this speech in the *Daily Express* that journal, in its editorial comments, has expressed its entire assent with the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman; and whether the right hon. Gentleman will proceed against the *Daily Express*, under Sub-section 4 of Section 2 of the Crimes Act, under which section the right hon. Gentleman has already proceeded against the editors of several Nationalist journals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not read the article in the *Daily Express*, but I think the answer to the general Question on the Paper will probably apply to the addendum which the hon. Gentleman has just read to the House. I understand that the hon. and gallant Member for Armagh, in the speech to which reference is made in the Question, foreshadowed an act of war against a hypothetical Government. If that Government should ever emerge from the land of dreamland into actual existence it will be for it to determine what course should be taken with my hon. and gallant Friend.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, as to the character of which I will make no observations, I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the words of the hon. and gallant Gentleman are not a direct incitement to civil war against a law that may be passed by the Imperial Parliament of this country, and whether the right hon. Gentleman has not prosecuted several Gentlemen for intimidating unknown persons—[*Ministerial laughter*]—I will call them hypothetical persons if that will please hon. Gentlemen opposite—and whether the right hon. Gentleman does not think that language like this, applied to a population which to a large extent is armed, owing to the neglect of the Government, does not directly tend to interfere with the administration of law and justice in Ireland?

MR. PICTON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has noticed the words, "in a fortnight we could put 50,000 men in the field under arms," which implies that 50,000 men are already enrolled?

MR. H. GARDNER: May I point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the hon. and gallant Gentleman says in his threat, "If there is a chance of a Home Rule Parliament." I would ask him whether these words come under his answer?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall not be Chief Secretary if there is such a chance, and I do not believe there will be such a chance.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the doctrine of contingent disloyalty is permitted in the British Army?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must point out to the hon. Gentleman that the question is whether the Chief Secretary intends to institute a prosecution. An answer has been given that no prosecution is intended, and I do not think any further question arises.

MR. SEXTON: With your leave, Mr. Speaker, I desire to ask whether the Secretary for War has inquired of the hon. and gallant Member the names of the leading officers in the British Army who, as he publicly asserted, pledged themselves to him in a certain event that they would violate their oaths?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; I have had no communication on the subject from my hon. and gallant Friend. My attention is now called to the matter for the first time by the Question on the Paper.

MR. SEXTON: By way of spurring the singularly languid curiosity of the right hon. Gentleman, I shall at the earliest opportunity move—

"That, in the judgment of this House, and in the interests of public order, it is requisite that the Member for North Armagh, himself a military officer, be called upon to disclose the names of those leading officers of the British Army who pledged themselves to him, on the occurrence of a certain event, that they would violate their oaths of fidelity and obedience to the Crown."

THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

MR. O'KEEFFE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been directed to a large number of persons, mechanics and labourers—400 alone from the city of Limerick—who left per steamer *Dresden*, from Queenstown to Buenos Ayres, on about the 15th of January last; and, whether, having regard to the expression of high ecclesiastical and lay opinion in Ireland as to the danger of numbers of these emigrants being left destitute after their arrival, he will direct Her Majesty's Consular Agent at the Argentine Republic to make inquiries as to their present condition and prospects, with a view to give reliable information in case of any further projected emigration to that country?

SIR J. FERGUSSON said, the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been for some time directed to the large extent to which emigration to the Argentine Republic has increased, and they have been in communication with Her Majesty's Representative at Buenos Ayres on the subject, and are considering whether any special agency is necessary for the purposes mentioned in the Question of the hon. Member.

PROVINCIAL COLLEGES.

MR. MUNDELLA asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is now prepared to lay upon the Table the promised scheme for aiding provincial colleges, and to fix the date when it will come into operation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: A Vote for Provincial Colleges has been put down in the Estimates for 1889-90. The Government have found considerable difficulty in deciding what colleges should be entitled to share in it, and in what proportions and on what conditions it should be distributed between them. They have accordingly appointed a small Committee to make particular inquiries and advise them on these points. The Committee will sit at an early date, and its deliberations are not likely to be prolonged. Upon receiving its Report the Government will settle the scheme of distribution. The sum voted will, of course, be available for the colleges which are entitled to share in it during the coming financial year.

THE LASH.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the sentence of flogging (30 lashes) for contempt of Court, imposed on Thomas Taylor, on July 27 last, by the Chief Justice of the Bahamas, was carried out?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the sentence was carried out on the day it was passed.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Are we to understand that the Chief Justice still holds office under the Crown?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Yes.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it had been brought to his notice that it had been sworn that Head Constable Gallagher and Sergeant Faussett, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and being now in this country on subpœnas from the solicitor of the *Times*, were directed by one Shannon, an agent of the *Times*, to accompany the *Times* witness Pigott from the Royal Courts of Justice to his hotel, and to reside at said hotel, in order to protect Pigott in case of need; whether the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary now in London on subpœnas, were permitted to take the orders of the agents and sub-agents of the *Times*, or to protect the *Times*' witnesses by order of the said agents or sub-agents; whether Head Constable Gallagher and Sergeant Faussett reported to their official superiors that they were being employed by a sub-agent of the *Times* in protecting a *Times*' witness; whether they were in receipt of official full pay during the period of their residence in London under subpœna, and their employment by the agents or sub-agents of the *Times*; whether he was aware that Sergeant Faussett had already appeared as a witness for the

Times, and why he still remained in London absent from his duty; and whether he would lay upon the Table of the House a Return giving the names of all the members of the Irish Constabulary, of all the Resident Magistrates, and of all other *employés* of the Irish Government, and who had come to this country under subpœnas from the *Times*, together with the number of days that each of them had remained in this country?

MR. MAC NEILL asked a Question of which he had given private notice—namely, whether the Shannon referred to in the Question was a brother of Mr. P. H. Shannon, an officer of the Royal Irish Constabulary, who filled the post of secretary to Colonel Turner, Divisional Magistrate, who was subsequently appointed a Resident Magistrate by the present Government? He asked this in order to show the connection of the present Government with the *Times*.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not see the relevancy of the Question, but I believe the fact which is stated is correct. It appears that Mr. Shannon, the solicitor, did not give any order to Head Constable Gallagher or Sergeant Faussett (not Forrest) to protect Pigott. What he did do was to ask the above men to change their hotel to the one at which Pigott was residing, in order that their presence there might prevent his being molested. They had no orders to interfere with his movements, or to follow him outside the hotel. No orders whatever emanated from these men's officers in the matter. The members of this force who are in London are in receipt of official full pay during their residence there on subpœna, and if they are employed by the agents or sub-agents of the *Times* except as witnesses it is not with my sanction. As regards the proposed Return, I think it would be very inadvisable to publish the names of the witnesses before they have been examined.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that Mr. Shannon swore before the Royal Commission that he had directed one of these constables to go with Pigott from the Royal Commission to his hotel?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I am not aware of that fact. Of course, the information I get is not from Mr. Shannon.

MR. CHANCE: Is it not a fact that the Royal Irish Constabulary have witnesses in London in charge of an inspector, for the purposes of the *Times*; and will the right hon. Gentleman inquire whether it was with that gentleman's sanction, consent, or connivance that these constables were placed at the unrestricted disposal of Mr. Shannon, of the *Times*?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is perfectly true that these constables are in the charge of an inspector, but I do not assent to the accuracy of the statement made by the hon. Gentleman that they are under the control of any agent of the *Times*.

MR. CHANCE: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire whether that is so or not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be glad to make any inquiry. Perhaps a Question will be put on the Paper.

THE CIVIL LIST.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a Committee had been sitting to consider what economies might be made in the present expenditure of the Civil List; whether the right hon. Gentleman was himself a Member of the Committee; whether, if such Committee had reported or come to an agreement, the result would be laid upon the Table of the House; and whether any economies, by the abolition or amalgamation of existing offices, had been agreed to; and whether, if so, the consequent saving would be paid into the Treasury; or, if not, how it was contemplated to dispose of it?

MR. W. H. SMITH: We have not appointed a Committee of Inquiry into economies which might be made in the present expenditure of the Civil List, and there has, therefore, been no agreement as to economies such as the hon. Member refers to. I stated last year that Her Majesty had been pleased to remit to us the subject of Royal Grants, and in discharge of the duty thus intrusted to us we have held conferences with those whose opinion we desired to obtain, and we have made certain inquiries which have no doubt led to the report that a Committee as described by the hon. Member has been sitting.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): Will the right hon. Gentleman be willing to extend the inquiry to all Royal Grants?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir; I should not be willing to extend the inquiry to the extent the hon. Gentleman suggests.

MR. ROBERTSON: I beg to give notice that I propose, when the hon. Member makes his Motion for the appointment of a Committee, to move that the inquiry be extended to the administration of the Civil List, and to all public appointments held by Members of the Royal Family, to the estates the income of which is enjoyed by Members of the Royal Family, and to any other of the national endowments of any member of the Royal Family out of public property or public funds.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman quite apprehended my Question, which was not whether a Committee had been appointed, but whether it had been sitting?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It has not been appointed, and therefore could not sit.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS.

MR. PICTON asked the Secretary of State for War whether it was true, as announced in the *Chemist and Druggist* trade journal, that Messrs. Seabury and Johnson, of New York, had been "appointed contractors to the British Government for the supply of surgical dressings;" and whether that meant that the above firm had obtained a contract; and, if so, whether it was because their prices were lower than those of native firms, or because their goods were better?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; the Medical Department has no contract with Messrs. Seabury and Johnson, or with any other American firm, for the supply of surgical dressings.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Home Secretary by whose orders the prisoners James Mullett and Patrick Nally, sentenced in 1883 for conspiracy to murder, were brought over from Irish prisons to a London gaol; whether they were visited here by a police officer, or by any representative of the *Times;* and if representatives of other "parties" before the Royal Commission would be allowed access to them so as to obtain a statement as to what inducements were held out to these prisoners to give evidence for the *Times;* and how long it was intended to keep these two men at Millbank?

MR. MATTHEWS: The prisoners Mullett and Nally were received in a London prison, in order that they might be produced as witnesses before the Special Commission. I am informed by the Director of Convict Prisons that they were visited on the 4th inst. by Mr. Thompson, on behalf of Mr. Soames, who made the usual official application for the purpose. The hon. Member for South Mayo has also applied for permission to see Nally, and, it having been ascertained that his visit is in accordance with the usual rule, permission has been granted. The like permission will be granted to other persons, in accordance with the prison rules as to visits. The prisoners named will be detained so long as they may be required before the Special Commission.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): By whose orders and by what authority have Irish constables been placed at the disposal of the agents for the *Times*, as was sworn on the 26th by Constable Gallagher?

*MR. SPEAKER: That does not arise immediately on the Question. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will put the Question on the paper.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford N.): By whose orders were the prisoners removed?

THE HOME SECRETARY: I presume by the orders of the prison authority in Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Have the Irish Prisons Board control over the English prisons, and can they furnish prisoners from the Irish for the English gaols at their will?

THE HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. Member wants general information as to these matters, I must ask for notice of the Question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether Head-constable Preston has not visited those prisoners continually on the part of the *Times*, and how it is that officer happens to be absent from his duties in Mayo. I also wish to know whether a person named Tracey has been removed from Ireland and kept in prison in Millbank, and has there been visited by Head-constable Preston?

MR. BALFOUR: I never heard of it. If the hon. Gentleman will put the Question on the paper, I will make inquiry.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I ask the Home Secretary whether he has any information as to the visits of Head-constable Preston?

THE HOME SECRETARY: No; my information is inconsistent with the suggestion.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): When am I likely to get permission to visit Nally? I asked for it on the 21st instant.

THE HOME SECRETARY: The authority is on its way. Reference was made to the prison authorities, and as soon as it was found that Nally was entitled to receive a visitor, the permission was given.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman assure the House that these two men have been visited by nobody except by persons entitled under the prison rules to visit them?

THE HOME SECRETARY: I have given the hon. Gentleman all the information I can on the subject.

NEGLECT OF CHILDREN.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked the President of the Local Government Board if he had taken advice whether or not Boards of Guardians were the only persons who were competent to institute a prosecution against parents under the 37th Section of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868, for wilfully neglecting to provide food for their children, being in their custody; and in any case, whether he would issue a circular calling the attention of Boards of Guardians to their duties and responsibilities in the matter?

MR. RITCHIE: I am advised that Boards of Guardians are not the only persons who are competent to institute proceedings against parents under the enactment referred to; but I should be sorry if the fact that such proceedings may be instituted by others should have any effect in inducing Boards of Guardians to be less vigilant with regard to such cases. So recently as the 31st of December last I caused a circular letter to be issued to the several Boards of Guardians, drawing their attention to the Section, and impressing upon them the duty which attaches to them of instituting prosecutions in the cases to which it refers.

IRELAND—THE MITCHELSTOWN AFFRAY, 1887.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether Mr. O'Neil Segrave, R.M., who was in command of the forces of the Crown at Mitchelstown in September, 1887, on the occasion of a collision with the people, in which three lives were lost, is the same Mr. O'Neil Segrave of whom the following notice appears in the *Government Gazette* of the Cape of Good Hope, published by authority on Friday, September 4th, 1885:—

"Head Quarters, Colonial Forces,
King William's Town, 24th August, 1885,
Colonial Forces Order, No. 281.

"His Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, has been pleased to approve of the following alterations, &c., in the Colonial Forces:—

"No. 2 Cape Infantry Regiment.

"Lieutenant O'Neil Segrave's services are dispensed with from 31st July, 1885.

"Herbert Watson Major, gentleman, to be Lieutenant, from 1st August, 1885, vice Segrave, whose services have been dispensed with.

"By Order,
"P. Kenion Ffolliott, Lt. Colonel,
"Military Secretary, Colonial Services."

And, what inquiries, if any, did the Government make into the antecedents of Mr. O'Neil Segrave previously to his appointment to the post of Resident Magistrate in October, 1886?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already explained that the Government are making full inquiries into all the circumstances, and I hope the hon. Member will agree with me it would be wise to await the result of such inquiries.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): May I ask how it happens that ten weeks have been consumed in making these inquiries? Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to give the House an assurance that the inquiry will be closed before the salary of this person is voted by the House?

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Is it not a matter of notoriety that this man was turned out of the Cape Army for embezzlement?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am making every inquiry into the matter, and

have done so since the information laid before the House led me to believe there was something to be investigated, which is not always the case. This Gentleman at once went on leave, and has remained on leave ever since. I apprehend that is the only course which it is proper to pursue. When I have made full investigation, it then remains for the Government to determine what course to adopt.

MR. SEXTON: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question. Has he any objection to give the House an assurance that the inquiry will be closed before we are asked to vote the salary for the Office?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have every expectation that it will; but I cannot say definitely. I cannot conceive that it will last so long.

MR. MAC NEILL: I will repeat the Question on Monday, and if necessary, move the adjournment of the House.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON THE HORSE GUARDS PARADE.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any decision has been arrived at by the Government in regard to the holding of Public Meetings on the Horse Guards Parade; and whether any objection will be raised to the holding of meetings there, under the same rules and regulation as are applied to meetings in the Public Parks?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Rules of Hyde Park, of Battersea Park, of Regent's Park, and of Victoria Park allow Public Meetings to be held in those Parks, and the Government have no intention of altering the Rules of St. James's Park, which prohibit the delivery of Public Addresses on the Horse Guards Parade.

MR. CREMER: Am I to understand by the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman that the meetings are not to be permitted on the Horse Guards Parade, and, if I have rightly interpreted the answer, has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to stating the reasons that induced Her Majesty's Government to arrive at that conclusion?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Member has interpreted my answer quite correctly, and the reasons which induced Her Majesty's Government to come to that conclusion are these: The Horse Guards Parade is situated in the centre of a large number of public offices, palaces, and public buildings, and in the immediate proximity to a large and important thoroughfare, and, in the opinion of those best competent to form an opinion, public meetings there and the assemblage of large masses of people going to the meetings, would be extremely likely to cause public obstruction.

MR. CREMER: May I ask whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and the Government has been directed to the fact that occasionally tens of thousands of people assemble on the Horse Guards Parade to witness military reviews, and on no occasion has there ever been a disturbance such as he fears?

MR. CONYBEARE: Are we to understand that the proclamation of Sir Charles Warren is still in force?

The two latter Questions were not answered.

CONVICTIONS UNDER THE CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, what is the number of convictions during the year 1888 under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act (1) for intimidation; (2) for riot; and (3) for taking forcible possession.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The number of convictions during the year 1888 under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act under the heads indicated in the Question were as follows:—(1) For intimidation, 137; (2) for riot, 164; (3) for taking forcible possession, 50. I have also been asked if I would lay on the Table a Return which I quoted, showing the percentage of convictions by Jurors and Magistrates. I do not think it is a proper paper to lay on the Table, because the result was simply arrived at by a sum in arithmetic from Returns already in possession of the House. On page 24 of the Criminal and Judicial Statistics for the year 1887, it is stated that the total number of persons proceeded against under the Crimes Act was 628, of whom 414 were convicted, a percentage of 66. A little lower

down on the same page it is stated that 1,991 were tried by Jury in the same year, and practically 71 per cent were convicted. These were the figures I gave to the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask whether, in a case where the Government, for the same speech, for the same act of intimidation, frame half-a-dozen different charges—that is to say, in a speech one might be charged probably with riot, taking part in an illegal conspiracy, taking part in an illegal assembly, and also intimidation—having obtained a conviction on one charge, the Government direct the Magistrates to enter acquittals on the others?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like to inquire into the matter; but what I apprehend is the fact is, that if a man is tried on several charges and is convicted under one and not under the others, if the others are withdrawn I presume he would not be returned as having been convicted under them.

MR. T. M. HEALY: And the Magistrates are credited with making so many acquittals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot answer that question off-hand. My information is only taken from the ordinary statistical information.

THE SALE AND USE OF REVOLVERS.

MR. R. W. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government intend to take measures to restrain the sale and use of revolvers?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not in a position to answer the Question, but I can assure the hon. Member that the matter is not being lost sight of.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government intend this Session to introduce a measure to give effect to the recommendations of the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament, appointed last Session to examine into the present system of Private Bill Legislation, in favour of "the establishment of Commissioners entrusted with the functions of Private Bill Committees."

MR. W. H. SMITH: It is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure dealing with Private Bill legislation, based on the report of the Joint Committee.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR: I beg to give notice that on Tuesday I shall ask leave to bring in a Bill for establishing a Commission to examine and report on Private Bills in Parliament and matters relating thereto.

MINING RENTS AND ROYALTIES.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to which the Bills which honourable Members have introduced, dealing with the question of Mining Rents and Royalties, may be referred.

MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. and learned Member asks whether a certain Bill not yet drafted—and consequently not yet received at the Public Bill Office—is to be referred to a Select Committee. Under the circumstances it is impossible for me to make any statement.

MR. CONYBEARE: I will repeat the Question another day.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. JOHN E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what sum of public money has already been advanced from the Temporary Commissions Vote towards defraying the charges of the Special Commission (Members of Parliament Charges and Allegations) Act, 1888?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The total expenditure to date from the Temporary Commission Vote on account of the Special Commission is as follows:—Salaries, £375 13s. 3d.; travelling, £20 15s. 7d.; shorthand-writing, £920 4s.; incidents, £27 19s. 4d.; imprest outstanding, £40: total, £1,384 12s. 2d. The payments under salaries are for the secretary and some copying clerks employed under him with Treasury authority. The only item of importance under "Travelling" is £8 16s. 2d. to the Commissioner of Police, for the expenses of officers sent by order of the Court after Molloy. "Incidents" represent, almost entirely, postage and telegrams. Besides the above, there is no doubt a heavy charge

on the Stationery Vote for printing, &c. The Special Commission is being treated in exactly the same way as any other temporary Commission, with the exception that no money is being found for witnesses.

MR. C. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether any moneys have been or will be paid out of the Secret Service Vote to any person or persons for or in connection with the Special Commission now sitting; or for or in connection with the collection of evidence in Ireland to be laid before such Commission; or for or in connection with the investigations made in Ireland or elsewhere as to matters laid before such Commission, or otherwise in connection with the charges and allegations made by the *Times* against Members of this House.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not think it right under ordinary circumstances to make any statements with reference to the application of Secret Service money, but under the special circumstances I feel I ought to reply to the hon. Member. I assure him that no Secret Service money has been or will be spent for the purposes indicated by the hon. Member. It is, of course, the duty of the Government to use Secret Service money for the purpose for which it is principally provided—namely, the prevention and detection of crime; but, I repeat, no money has been or will be used by the Government for the purposes specified by the hon. Member.

MR. SEXTON: Do the Government intend to make any proposal in regard to the costs of the defence with reference to the forged letters which the *Times* admitted to-day they had falsely attributed to Mr. Parnell, Mr. Egan, Mr. O'Kelly, and Mr. Davitt.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That has no connection with the Question on the Paper.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to point out that the Question on the Paper alludes——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The Question on the Paper refers to the application of the Secret Service Fund.

MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the *facsimile* letter published in the *Star* of Monday last, purporting to be a letter addressed by Joseph Soames, Solicitor to the *Times* newspaper, to the Proprietors, announcing the suspension of the usual dividend, and containing the following sentence:—"No provision has been made by 'The Special Commission Act, 1888,' for the payment of any part of the expense incurred by the parties to the present inquiry. What action, if any, Parliament may take in this respect remains to be seen. In view, however, of this uncertainty, and of the heavy expense," &c.; and, whether he, or any other person on behalf of the Government, has given the *Times* any ground or reason for thus intimating to the Proprietors that their expenses might be recouped to them by a Parliamentary Vote.

MR. SEXTON: Perhaps under this Question my Question will be relevant. I wish to ask whether the Government propose to defray any of the costs of the defence of the forged letters which the *Times* admit they have falsely attributed to Mr. Parnell, Mr. Egan, Mr. O'Kelly, and Mr. Davitt, and which were the product of a gross and disgraceful fraud, and also whether, as the Government intend to faciliate the detection of crime, they will aid Irish Members financially to pursue what they claim to be a foul and criminal conspiracy against them, of which the man Houston is one of the instruments.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I will reply at once to the question of the hon. Member, although I think it would have been better if notice had been given. The Government are not in a position to make any recommendation to the House until they have considered the Report of the Commission, which will be presented to Parliament; and, as regards that which is alleged to be a foul conspiracy——

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Alleged? Admitted.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have no knowledge of the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers. I can only repeat what I have always stated—that any exertion which the Government can use for the detection of crime and the punishment of crime will be used by the Government. In answer to the question of the hon. Member, I have to say I have not, nor has any person on behalf of the

Government, intimated to the proprietors of the *Times* that their expenses might be recouped by a Parliamentary Vote.

MR. P. A. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Arising out of the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, might I ask him whether he will take effective steps to secure that no documents in the possession of any officer of the Government will be destroyed?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I can hardly suppose that the hon. Gentleman is serious in asking that. Any Member of the Government who was privy to the destruction of documents which were necessary to the enforcement of justice would deserve to be impeached.

MR. CHANCE: That is not answering my question, Sir. My question was whether the Government would see that effective steps were taken that no officer of the Government—no Government official—should be permitted to destroy documents.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it is hardly necessary for me to answer that question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether the Government has reconsidered the offer they formerly made to Members on this side of the House—namely, to lend the Irish Nationalist Members the services of Her Majesty's Attorney-General to prosecute the *Times* in connection with the criminal publication of the forged letters.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the hon. and learned Member would hardly wish me to answer that question. At all events, if he does think it necessary, it will be desirable he should put it on the paper.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I have to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, if Her Majesty's Attorney General persists in the making of criminal charges and allegations against Members of this House, Her Majesty's Government, in view of the withdrawal by that official of the forged letters, alleged by him to have been written by the hon. Member for Cork, will continue him in his office of Attorney General; can he state what portion of his time has been devoted to his office of Attorney General during the sittings of the Royal Commission; and whether any previous Attorney General has been allowed exclusively to devote himself for several months to private practice?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It is notorious that any charges which the Attorney General has advanced have been made in his capacity as counsel for the *Times*, and in strict accordance with the rules which regulate the conduct of counsel. He has not departed, so far as I am aware, in any respect from the practice which has prevailed with regard to the Law Officers of the Crown. It is not in my power to say what time he has recently devoted to the special duties of his office: but he has discharged them with assiduity and to the satisfaction of the Government. Former Attorney Generals have certainly undertaken private practice to the full extent to which the present holder of that office has done.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether his attention has been called to the fact that, so far back as the beginning of the month of November, now nearly four months since, the learned Attorney General, who, as he says, was discharging his functions to the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government, had, under the hand of Richard Pigott, a statement that he was unable to bear cross-examination, and that, if produced as a witness, the most damaging admissions would have to be made by him in regard to his previous character; and whether he has referred that statement to the learned Attorney General, and whether the Government retain that confidence in the learned Gentleman to which the right hon. Gentleman has just given expression?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have no knowledge of the circumstances to which the hon. Member refers. I must, therefore, ask him, if he desires an answer, to put the Question on the paper. I have referred to the way in which the Attorney General has discharged his duties *qua* Attorney General.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give notice that at the first opportunity I will move,—Resolved, that in the opinion of this House, Mr. Attorney General has forfeited its confidence.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Attorney General, speaking as the Attorney General from the Front Bench, did not, in the discussion upon the Special Commission Bill,

say as an argument for passing that Bill, that if he were counsel for the *Times* again he would prove one of those forged letters to be genuine.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. E. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Mr. Speaker: May I be allowed to answer that Question myself? I never made any such statement, or anything which, by any distortion of my words, is capable of that interpretation.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I will put the words down in a Question for to-morrow.

MR. SEXTON: Will the First Lord of the Treasury ask the learned Attorney General whether he adopts the conclusion stated in open court by his clients, the *Times*—that the letters were the product of a gross and disgraceful fraud?

*MR. SPEAKER: ["Order, order!"] These are not proper questions to ask in the House of Common; they ought to be asked elsewhere.

MR. J. W. PHILIPPS: I wish to ask the Home Secretary what precautions he has taken that neither Houston nor any other of the *Times* witnesses shall be able to escape out of the jurisdiction.

MR. MATTHEWS: The practice of making suggestions against private individuals under cover of questions of this kind appears to me to be open to the very gravest objection. I must absolutely decline to state what steps I take against any individual whatever. I may inform the hon. Member that it is no part of my duty, and it is not within my power, to look after persons whom he styles witnesses. The duty of the Home Secretary and of the police of the Metropolis is to look after and prevent the escape of persons charged with crime. Whenever notice of any charge of crime comes to my ears I shall act as the law requires.

MR. PHILIPPS: With reference to the objection of the Home Secretary as to the form of my Question, I should like to remind him that the same Question——

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member will ask a question he will be in order.

MR. PHILLIPS: My Question is whether the same Question was not put to the Home Secretary yesterday, and whether he did not promise to answer it to-day.

MR. MATTHEWS: No; I gave no such promise.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the Home Secretary with reference to the steps taken to apprehend Pigott, at what hour telegrams were sent out from Scotland Yard to British agents at home and abroad to aid in the capture of Pigott?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must take leave to say that, if the hon. and learned Member desires to facilitate the escape of Pigott, the effect of Questions in this House as to the action of the police undoubtedly tend in that direction. I must, therefore, in the discharge of my duty, decline to say more than that the police are taking all the steps that are usual and proper in a case of perjury and forgery.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How will it facilitate in any way the escape of Pigott?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. and learned Member is proceeding to argue with the right hon. Gentleman. The question is a purely argumentative one.

MEETINGS IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I wish to ask the Home Secretary whether, since the appointment of Mr. Munro as Chief Commissioner, the Proclamation issued by Sir Charles Warren respecting Trafalgar Square has been withdrawn or whether it is still in force?

MR. MATTHEWS: The proclamation has not been withdrawn.

CONDUCT OF THE POLICE.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I wish to ask the Home Secretary another Question on a matter affecting my own Constituency, and it is of such urgency that I venture to put it without notice. I have a letter from Mr. James Branch, a well-known manufacturer in Bethnal Green, and a member of the London County Council, in which he says, "A policeman called here for a copy of the bill enclosed." The bill is simply an announcement of a public meeting at the Bethnal Green Liberal and Radical Club, for the purpose of hearing a lecture by a Member of this House upon "Democracy and its aims." Mr. Branch writes:—

"The policeman stated that he was ordered to call for the bill by his sergeant at the Commercial Street Station. I told him to tell

his sergeant that he had no right or authority to send for these bills, and I should certainly decline to give him one. They did the same at Bow a few days since, when we instructed our printer to refuse any such application, and I think it is being done for the sole purpose of intimidation."

I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman by whose directions this is done, and why these inquisitorial annoyances are committed by the police, seeing that they were absolutely unknown until the advent to power of the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. MATTHEWS: The circumstances mentioned by the hon. Member are entirely unknown to me; but it is the well-established practice of the police to obtain information of meetings where large numbers of people would probably be gathered together, with a view to preventing any breach of the peace or disorder occurring. The object is not to intimidate, but to protect. The practice was a recognised one long before I became Home Secretary.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to give notice that I will take an early opportunity of calling further attention to this matter.

MR. CONYBEARE: I happen to be the hon. Member who is to deliver this address. Will the right hon. Gentleman institute inquiries at the Commercial Street Station as to why constables are appointed to guard the street in which a club is situated, at which I have the honour of attending. Is he aware the meeting in question is held on private premises and not in an open space?

THE SPEAKER: Order, order. It will be more convenient for Questions of this character to be given notice of.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. CAREW.

MR. J. J. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary a Question which was put to the Solicitor General for Ireland yesterday. It is whether the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant will, by removing Mr. Carew from Kilkenny Gaol to Dublin, give the hon. Gentleman facilities for consulting his legal adviser and preparing his defence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It would have been more convenient to have had notice of this Question. I have seen some Report, but I must say I do not understand how it would enable Mr. Carew to prepare his defence if he be removed from Kilkenny to Kilmainham.

MR. CLANCY: Mr. Carew's solicitor resides in Naas, and I have a letter from the solicitor to say that if he leaves home at 5 o'clock in the morning to see Mr. Carew he cannot get back until 7 o'clock at night. Mr. Carew's counsel lives in Dublin, and he must leave at 10 o'clock in the morning, and he cannot get home again until 7 o'clock. To keep Mr. Carew in Kilkenny means that he is to be deprived of the opportunity of consulting his legal advisers. My Question is, whether the Government will connive at that?

MR. SEXTON: Is it true that Mr. Carew has been put in a boarded cell and supplied with hospital diet, but that his clothes have not been restored to him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of that. I believe, but I am not sure. The right hon. Gentleman had better put a Question on the Paper; it is very inconvenient to answer without notice.

MR. CLANCY: I am sorry to have to put another question on the subject, but I do it because no time is to be lost in this matter. The action is to be tried shortly, and Mr. Carew wants all the time between the present and the trial in order to consult his legal advisers. I wish to ask whether, if the right hon. Gentleman observes that the keeping of Mr. Carew in Kilkenny Gaol will practically deprive him of consulting his legal advisers, he will pass over the prison rules, and direct Mr. Carew's removal to Kilmainham.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have never yet heard it suggested that a prisoner should be removed from one prison to another in order to be near his solicitor. If, however, Mr. Carew's solicitor will lay the facts before the Prisons Board the matter will no doubt be considered.

MR. CLANCY: I am very sorry to have to interfere once more, but I beg to inform the right hon. Gentleman that the Prisons Board have already been informed of the facts, and have refused the request.

MR. J. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): May I be permitted to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman upon the matter, of which I can speak with some knowledge, as I happened to be pro-

fessionally engaged in the case. It is perfectly impossible for Mr. Carew to have the necessary consultations with his professional advisers in the jail in which he is at present. The facts have been laid before the Prisons Board, and they have refused to remove Mr. Carew. I have therefore to ask the Chief Secretary whether in this state of facts he will take upon himself to recommend that the Prisons Board should at once order the removal of Mr. Carew to Dublin? The case is coming on at the forthcoming assizes at Belfast, and therefore the matter is one of the most extreme urgency.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course I shall be very glad to make any inquiry; but I think the hon. Gentleman and the House will feel that this is rather an extraordinary request to make. Instead of the solicitor going to the prisoner, the prisoner is to be removed from one prison to another to suit the convenience of the solicitor.

MR. J. REDMOND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been called to the remarks of the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland in a similar case heard the other day, which were to the effect that he and the members of his Court hoped that in all cases of that kind every facility possible would be given by the Prisons Board to enable prisoners to have the necessary consultations with their solicitors?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman may be sure that of those remarks I entirely approve.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the right hon. Gentleman has said it is impossible to remove prisoners from one jail to another for the convenience of a particular solicitor, will he say how it is that certain prisoners have been brought from Ireland to London in the interest of the *Times?*

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not fully aware of the facts; but I understand that that was in obedience to some mandate of a Court.

IRELAND—MR. CECIL ROCHE.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I desire to put a question to the Chief Secretary with regard to Mr. Cecil Roche, one of the Resident Magistrates who recently sentenced Mr. O'Brien to imprisonment; it is, whether it is the fact that Mr. Houston, whose name will not be unfamiliar to the right hon. Gentleman, was before Mr. Roche's elevation to the magistracy, Mr. Houston's employer and paymaster.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I know nothing about that, nor do I think it is a proper subject to put a Question to me about.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Jabez Spencer Balfour, esquire, for Burnley.

STOWMARKET COUNTY COURT.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he is aware that the clerk to the Registrar of the Stowmarket County Court has not yet been appointed by Sir Francis Roxburgh, the County County Judge, to administer oaths under Section 83 of the Act of last Session; and if he will see that the Judge forthwith nominates suitable persons in every district to administer oaths in the absence of the Registrars?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Lord Chancellor that he does not know whether the Judge has, or has not, made any such appointment; that the matter is left by the Act entirely within the discretion of the Judge, and does not appear to be intended as a provision for the absence of the Registrar. Any complaint on the matter should be addressed directly to the Judge.

DEFECTIVE CAVALRY SWORDS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether it was the fact, as stated by the *Times* Indian correspondent on 25th February, that "of 500 swords of the Madras Cavalry recently tested half were broken or bent"; if so, what number so tested were defective; and what proportion of the swords and bayonets in the hands of British and Native troops in India have been submitted to a Government test, and what proportion of those so tested have proved defective?

LORD HENRY BRUCE asked the Secretary of State for War whether the statement is substantially correct that out of 500 swords of the Madras Cavalry recently tested, half were broken or bent; and, if so, who is to blame?

SIR J. E. GORST: The Secretary of State has no information on this subject, but has telegraphed for a full Report to be sent by an early mail, which will, when received, answer the inquiries of the hon. Member and of the noble Lord.

MR MAC NEILL: Will the hon. Gentleman be kind enough to give the names of the contractors who supplied the swords, and also state whether the swords were made in England or India?

SIR J. E. GORST: The Secretary of State has already telegraphed to India for information, and is awaiting an answer.

MOTION.

—o—

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

On Motion of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Bill for amending the Law relating to Weights and Measures; and for other purposes connected therewith, ordered to be brought in by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and Baron Henry de Worms.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 136.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [21st February]—[See page 41.]

And which Amendment was,

In paragraph 8, line 4, to leave out all the words after the word "Country," to the end of the paragraph, in order to insert the words,—"But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the present system of administration in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust, that it violates the rights and alienates the affections of Your Majesty's Irish Subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain:

"And, we humbly represent to Your Majesty that such measures of conciliation should be adopted as may bring about the contentment of the Irish people, and establish a real union between Great Britain and Ireland,"—(*Mr. John Morley*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, C.): Mr. Speaker, I had not quite concluded my remarks when the House adjourned yesterday, and therefore I ask permission to make a few more observations. Yesterday, I endeavoured to show that the Chief Secretary for Ireland is responsible for the conduct of the Resident Magistrates in the sentences they pass on conviction under the Crimes Act, and that the right hon. Gentleman does not exercise the discretion which he possesses of directing that the prisoners should be treated as first-class misdemeanants. I quoted the language of the Chief Secretary, but the right hon. Gentleman was not satisfied with my quotation. I said I would look at the speech again, and having done so, I find I was justified in everything I said on the subject. The Chief Secretary has spoken several times on the treatment of political prisoners, and in every case has justified their treatment as common criminals. In a speech on the 6th of August last the right hon. Gentleman said that nothing would induce him, as long as he was Chief Secretary, to draw a distinction between one class of offenders against the law and another. In a speech he made in December last, he said that it was impossible, in his opinion, to draw a distinction between political offences and other crimes. Again, on Friday last, in one of the most ungenerous speeches ever addressed to the House, in which he accused these prisoners of malingering, of imaginary sufferings, foolish mania, obtaining relaxation of rules, and so on, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"He would not, so long as he was Irish Secretary, admit that any man had earned special privileges in an Irish prison because he had been engaged in the shocking crimes for which Members of that House had been imprisoned under the Crimes Act."

Therefore I am entitled to say that the right hon. Gentleman has given a cue to the Resident Magistrates, and they have followed it. In a debate which took place in December, Mr. Edward Harrington gave his experience in prison in a speech of great dignity and moderation; he described the indignities to which he had been subjected, how his clothes had been torn off, how he had been ordered to take exercise with criminals, and on refusing to do so was put upon bread and water; and, worst of all, when he had to give

evidence in a Court of Justice, he was brought among his own constituents in prison dress. I myself saw Mr. Blunt in Court in prison garb.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He refused to put on ordinary clothes.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I was not aware of that. At all events I saw Mr. Sheehy in Loughrea in prison garb, and he had not refused; neither had Mr. E. Harrington refused, for he made a complaint on the subject to the House. The right hon. Gentleman has directed the prosecution of no fewer than 11 Members of this House, some of whom got three months', four months', and five months' imprisonment for speeches, all of which had been forgotten. These 11 men have been prosecuted during the Recess, and they have all, or nearly all, been sentenced to imprisonment as common prisoners, and for the first time two of them, Mr. E. Harrington and Mr. Condon, were subjected to hard labour. The gaolers also have taken the cue and increased their severity to the prisoners, whom they have submitted to the indignity of having their hair cut. There never was a greater outrage committed in the name of law than that in Mr. E. Harrington's case. As the House has heard from the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Madden), he was tried for one offence and sentenced on another. No evidence was given in support of the charge, which related to the speech which he had made, but he was sentenced to six months' hard labour for publishing reports of meetings of suppressed branches of the National League. For 16 months no person has been proceeded against for a similar offence. The Solicitor General said that if Mr. Harrington had undertaken not to repeat the offence he would have been let off. No one in Ireland would give such an undertaking; indeed, I read in the *Freeman's Journal* that a poor widow and her daughter were sent to gaol for two or three months for refusing to give such an undertaking. Mr. E. Harrington preferred to apply to the Superior Court for a *habeas corpus* rather than to appeal. He did not succeed, and therefore an appeal was not open to him. Then there is the case of Mr. Carew, one of the most respected Members of the House, and a thorough gentleman in every respect. He was convicted of conspiracy to induce persons not to take evicted farms. For that offence he was sentenced to four months' imprisonment. Mr. Carew declined to appeal, because the County Court Judge —Judge Darling—had expressed his determination never to interfere in the exercise of the Magistrates' discretion unless he was satisfied the Magistrates had made some mistake in law. I will not deal with the case of Mr. O'Brien further than to say that it is necessary that someone as well known and popular as Mr. O'Brien should bring vividly to the public mind the iniquity of the present system. Mr. Sheehy has made a similar resistance to these prison indignities, especially to the enforced exercise with common criminals. There is no civilized country in Europe where such indignities are inflicted on political prisoners. In France the question is not so much one of law as of administration. It is impossible by law to define what is a political prisoner; the matter is therefore left to the administration of the Minister of the Interior. In 1883 M. Thiers issued a circular in which he directed that political prisoners should be treated with special indulgence. Under this category came offenders under the Press Laws, and those who had been convicted in connection with public meetings. All doubtful cases were to be referred to the Minister of the Interior. The rules were liberally administered, and even members of the International, who advocated something like public plunder, were held to come within them, while those who had joined in the excesses of the Commune—*pétroleuses* and the like, were treated under the ordinary law. That disposes of the Chief Secretary's argument with respect to dynamiters. In former times in our own country a like leniency was extended to political crime. In 1809 William Cobbett, who was convicted of inciting soldiers to mutiny, was treated with extraordinary indulgence, even allowed when in prison to have his children with him and to continue the publication of the *Weekly Register*, containing as it did bitter attacks on the Government. Leigh Hunt composed in prison some of his best poems. Some of the best things in English literature have been written by political prisoners in

goal. I might, perhaps, recommend to right hon. Gentlemen opposite a little book called "Prison Lyrics," which was committed to memory by Mr. Wilfred Blunt, while he was in prison recently. The same policy was followed in the imprisonment of Mr. O'Connell. He, convicted of conspiring to intimidate and create terror among the people, was treated in prison with extraordinary indulgence. On many days his dinner party consisted of as many as 30 people. It is stated also that Sir Charles Gavan Duffy received lessons in elocution during the time he was in gaol. I quote these instances for the purpose of showing what was the practice in the past, and I say the Chief Secretary has practically inaugurated a new policy by treating Irish Members and others in the manner he has treated them—a policy, I venture to say, discreditable to this country, and opposed to the good fame of England. It appears to me to have been the deliberate policy of the right hon. Gentleman to affix to Irish Members the *status* of criminals. He always speaks of offences under the Crimes Act as crimes and the perpetrators as criminals, and in a speech from which I quoted a short time ago he spoke of the offence committed by Irish Members, and afterwards alluded to those who committed such offences as "shocking criminals." It appears to be part of that same policy that has been exposed before the Royal Commission—the policy of branding the Irish Leader and his principal Colleagues with connivance, with outrage and crime. In Ireland the policy has been to treat those Members who have committed offences under the Crimes Act as criminals in every sense of the term. One part of this policy has altogether failed. It is exploded. The accused have become the accusers, and I will venture to say the policy of the Chief Secretary, in reference to the Crimes Act, will be equally unsuccessful. It was on the very day for the Second Reading of the Crimes Act that the forged letters were published, with the object of influencing public opinion and enabling the Government to carry their Act through; and I say, therefore, that forged letters, Coercion Act, and Government might appropriately disappear from the scene together. I would not even make an exception in favour of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In conclusion, let me say a word on the effect of the policy. The treatment of Irish prisoners and others in this matter has been foolish and wanton, and has not had the desired effect. It does not deter people from committing offences of this kind; on the contrary, it rather stimulates and induces people to do the same thing. There are numbers of people in Ireland who have been induced, by the very manner in which these prisoners have been treated, to commit similar offences. In yesterday's *Freeman's Journal* it appears that the evictions upon the Clanricarde estate have been renewed. I was under the impression that the Chief Secretary had refused to lend the forces of the Crown for carrying out evictions on this estate. I thought that Dr. Healy, the coadjuting Bishop of the diocese, had persuaded the right hon. Gentleman that it was not wise to do so, and I am surprised that a force is assisting the landlord on that estate. The account in the *Freeman's Journal* says six families were evicted on the previous day, and turned out upon the roadside. The weather was intensely cold, and snow covered the ground. It was pitiful, the correspondent said, to see old men, women, and young children shivering in the cold, while their household goods were being scattered about the yard. Twenty Emergency men, a hundred police, and a detachment of soldiers assisted at the evictions. It appears that the force assembled on the previous night. For my own part, I can only say that, having taken up the case of these unfortunate people, I will not be backward in supporting them in future, in the absence of their legitimate advisers, their Representatives, and the Leaders of the Irish Party—Mr. O'Brien and the hon. Member for Mayo, who, I am sorry to hear, is compelled to leave England for the benefit of his health. The Representatives of the country are about to go to prison, and I say that if I can render any assistance, if they desire it, by going there and holding a meeting to protest against these cruel evictions, I shall feel it my duty to do so, and I will give whatever advice to the tenants may seem pertinent to the occasion. In conclusion, I will refer to words used by my hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees. He con-

cluded his short speech by saying that, in Ireland—

"A great system was working for equity and freedom, and an ever-increasing attempt to give the same guarantees for independence as England possessed."

I am sorry to think my right hon. Friend is living in a fool's paradise; for that appears to me exactly the converse of what is taking place. For my part, after some inquiry in Ireland during several visits, and having paid more attention to the facts of the cases that have occurred there under the Coercion Act than most Members during the last two years, I have certainly come to the conclusion that the administration of Ireland under the present Chief Secretary is being carried out by an organized system of police espionage, supported by and supporting a system of Coercion, carried out in total contempt of Irish opinion—in total disregard of all those Constitutional principles which the English people most value and uphold.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, West): I must confess that I am somewhat disappointed by the speech to which we have just listened. When my right hon. Friend rose yesterday afternoon I hoped that he would at least introduce some novelty into the debate, and rise to the height of this great argument. My right hon. Friend has devoted special attention to Ireland and to Irish policy, and he has devoted to that question all the resources of a most painstaking intellect; and certainly I hoped that on the present occasion he would have given to the House some general principles of policy upon which we might have continued the discussion, and that he would not have confined himself, as he has done, strictly to the lines of previous speakers, and to a disquisition on all the petty details of administration in Ireland. I wish to recall to the House the fact that the Amendment we are considering consists of two branches. In the first place, this Amendment condemns in unhesitating and unqualified terms the present system of administration in Ireland; and, in the second place, it goes on to suggest an alternative policy and the adoption of such measures of conciliation as would bring about the contentment of the Irish people and establish a real union between Great Britain and Ireland. Surely the second part of the Amendment is much more important than the first, and yet, from first to last, although we have had three days' debate, no single speaker has uttered one single word upon the second branch. The line of argument hitherto has, in my opinion, not been broad enough to sustain a Vote of Censure. What is it that we are asked to do? We are asked to censure the Government, knowing that the result of that would be a change of Government; and, what is more important, an entire change in the relations between this country and Ireland. Surely, if we are to take so important a step as that, we ought to know something of the policy of the Government which is to succeed the one we are asked to condemn. It may be a good thing to make such a change; it may be that the time has come for it; but, if so, why do you argue, why do not you give us and the country an opportunity of considering what are the circumstances which should now lead us to reverse the policy at which we arrived only two years ago? In 1886 the policy of Home Rule, the policy of a separate Parliament in Dublin, was rejected in this House; and it was rejected still more conclusively in the country. It may be that our fears which led us to join in that rejection may have been groundless. It may be that in course of the two years which have elapsed you have found new arguments which will enable you to recommend more successfully the policy which was then rejected. Why do not you produce the arguments to the House? Why do you ask us to give a verdict on false pretences? Why do you ask us to accept Home Rule not by any arguments in favour of Home Rule, but by petty attacks on the Administration? I say that the course we are asked to take is too important to be decided by a side wind. The fate of the Empire, the peace of Ireland, by your own assertion, depend upon the course which you are recommending. The fate of the Empire and the peace of Ireland ought not to be allowed to depend upon the question whether one particular Member of Parliament has had his hair cut and another Member of Parliament has refused to be weighed. What are the grounds, hitherto submitted to this House, upon which we are asked to

reverse the decision at which we arrived in 1886? We are to accept a Home Rule Administration—because that is the question—because it appears that under the Coercion Act, out of some 5,000,000 subjects of Her Majesty in Ireland, there are at the present time 111 persons, all told, who have been confined for short periods of imprisonment in the Irish gaols. It is not denied by anybody that these persons have committed the offences with which they are charged. They boast of it; it is made part of the case on their behalf that they have committed these offences deliberately, of course with the best intentions and motives. It is not denied, I believe, that offences of this kind must be repressed. Either you must do away with the state of things under which these offences are committed or you must repress the offenders. But it is said in a few cases—as far as I know not in more than half-a-dozen of them—the sentences which have been inflicted are harsh and excessive; and it is said that in another small number of cases, probably a score, or it may be a little more than a score, the treatment of those offenders, after they have been convicted, has been unnecessarily harsh. These allegations are all of them made on *ex parte* statements. They are made either on the authority of the persons themselves or on the authority of newspaper editors, and I should have thought hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway were not inclined to place implicit reliance upon newspaper statements. Yet it is upon this evidence with which the House is called upon to deal, and with which, even if it were better evidence, the House is incapable of dealing—it is upon this evidence, which is not good enough to hang a dog upon, that you are asked to turn out a Government and to replace them with what I may call a Home Rule Administration. Even if these allegations were proved up to the hilt: that there has been harsh administration of the law in Ireland; that, to accept the language of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, there has been a prostitution of the law in Ireland; that there are unjust Judges in Ireland; that there are gaolers devoid of human sympathy, who actually take a personal delight in torturing their prisoners—even if all that were true, although it might be ground for an inquiry by this House, and for the condemnation of the persons concerned, and for an appeal to the Crown to remove these unjust Judges, and to the Government to remove these unjust gaolers, yet it would not of itself be a ground for removing the Government. Certainly not; and it is no ground at all for altering the policy upon which the Government have taken their stand. It is perfectly evident that the promoters of this debate feel that they are weak. They feel that it is not enough to prove up to the hilt charges against officials in Ireland, but that it is necessary to connect the Government with their malpractices, and, accordingly, they have not hesitated to impute the basest, the meanest, and the wickedest motives to the Members of the Government, and, above all, to the Chief Secretary. It has been insinuated from these Benches, and directly alleged from the Benches below the Gangway, that the Chief Secretary has consented to, and has, in fact, stimulated, the torture of political opponents who have worsted him in debate.

MR. DILLON: They have done it all the same.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: We have a precedent for action of this kind. I remember that in a previous Administration there were some abominable crimes, not alleged, but proved, against officials and persons of position in Ireland—some persons connected with Dublin Castle. The accused were brought to trial, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment, and then the Party below the Gangway charged the Government of the day—charged Lord Spencer and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow—with conniving at those outrageous offences. They even went further, and charged them with personal sympathy with those outrages. Now this precedent is followed, and the same Party, cheered, I am sorry to say, from above the Gangway, are charging the Government, not, indeed, with connivance with crime, for crime is not alleged, but, at all events, with motives which I should deem to be criminal. I say that the charge is preposterous. I say more. There is not a man in this House, wherever he sits and whatever he may think it fit to do in these bitter Party recriminatory discussions—there is not a

man in this House who believes a word of it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary can afford very well to disregard these charges. He knows that if he would come down here to-morrow—if he would say, like some of his predecessors, that he had "found salvation" in four-and-twenty hours—if he would say that he was a convert to Home Rule, he would be covered with the profuse adulation of the hon. Members who now abuse him, although, perhaps, in the one case as in the other, their personal admiration would not be accompanied by much personal respect. Well, Sir, supposing for the sake of argument I go further and admit, not the motives charged against the Chief Secretary—that would be absurd—but supposing I admit that he has made a mistake, and by an error of judgment done something which he ought not to have done, or refrained from something which he ought to have done, I say that again would be a reason for a representation from this House, but it would not be a sufficient reason for replacing the Chief Secretary and the Government of which he is a Member by a new Chief Secretary and a Government pledged to a policy which by hypothesis we are all bound to oppose. I complain that in this debate hitherto we have not reached the real kernel of the argument. I wish to come to the second branch of the Amendment which has been proposed. I quite admit that if there be such a policy as is here indicated, if there be a policy of conciliation which will secure contentment in Ireland, and if that policy is refused by the Government, then undoubtedly you have a sufficient reason for turning them out, and I think the sooner you do so the better. But if you have such a policy as that, why do you not put it before us? Why do you not tell us what it is? Why do you not allow us to judge of it? No; I know that that would not answer your purpose. You want us to swallow your policy with our eyes shut. We respectfully decline to do so. Now in 1886 my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian contended that there were only two alternatives before the House and the country. One was a system of Coercion more stringent than any which had previously existed, and the other was his own policy of conciliation, which was represented by his two Bills. At that time we protested against this. We said there was a third alternative, and that it was possible to continue on the ancient lines of Liberalism, and, while steadily maintaining the Union in all its fulness and completeness, at the same time to seek out and remedy any proved grievances on the part of the Irish people. But we said at the same time that it would be within your power to make that alternative impossible. We said it was within the power of hon. Members, and, above all, hon. Members from Ireland, to create such an agitation in Ireland as would make repressive measures absolutely necessary, and we all know that since that time it has been the deliberate and avowed policy of the Irish Members to make the Government of Ireland impossible, and to force Coercion on the Government of the country. But, at least, I say this. If we were to have Coercion, so far from its being the most stringent Coercion ever known, it is the mildest in the history of the country. ["No, no!"] Well, let us contrast it with some Coercions which preceded it. Under this Act, which is represented as so arbitrary and as so tyrannical, under which the whole country of Ireland is alleged to be groaning, you have just 111 men, and no more, in prison, and for short periods of imprisonment. In the time of the late Mr. Forster over 1,000 men were in prison at one time, and at that time there was very much less success attended the imprisonment of those 1,000 persons than has now attended the imprisonment of 111 gentlemen who are now, unfortunately, confined for the pacification of Ireland; because as to the result of this Coercion Act there can be no two opinions. You may say, if you like, that other things have contributed to this result; but the result itself is indubitable and undeniable. You may test the condition of Ireland by any of the usual tests, and you will find that in all respects it has been enormously improved. Since the Act was passed the number of outrages has diminished, boycotting has been immensely reduced, the number of persons claiming protection is very much less, and, more important than all, people begin to recognize that they can do what they have a legal

right to do, and are beginning to take vacant farms all over the country. Under these circumstances I say there is no case where so much good in the way of pacifying the country has been effected with so little real repression and interference with individual liberty. But then it may be said that although the law can be justified, yet the administration of the law has been conducted with excessive harshness. Now, just let us look into the alleged abuses of the law, and let me point out that this kind of allegation is made against every law in every country and at all times. I am bound to say that there is not a bench of magistrates in the United Kingdom against which similar charges have not been made—charges, that is to say, of administering law in such a way as to inflict unjust or unequal sentences. These charges are very often made without sufficient proof; but, even if they were proved, you never heard anybody coming to the House of Commons and proposing a Vote of Censure on the Government because some magistrate committed a man for six months when he should only have given him two. Now we have had a number of individual cases brought before the House. Every one of these has been replied to categorically, either by the Chief Secretary for Ireland or the Solicitor General for Ireland; and with one exception, to which I will refer, the answers appear to me to be satisfactory. At all events, they are sufficient to show conclusively that there are two sides to the case, and that the House of Commons would be very improperly advised if it accepted a purely *ex parte* statement. Take one case as a type of the rest and as significant of the light way in which these accusations, apparently without any investigation, are brought forward. Here is a case brought forward by my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, and made part of his solemn indictment of the Government, for it was not like a speech in debate—it was a deliberately prepared indictment against the Government; and he quoted it as one reason why, as I have said, we should turn out the Government and adopt a Home Rule policy.

"There is one case," said my right hon. Friend, "in which I hope the Chief Secretary will give us further information, for the circumstances, as stated, are so extraordinary that I cannot believe them. But he, perhaps, can tell us whether they are true or not. Two young men were charged with obstructing a constable at Ennis on February 10th. The obstruction consisted in the defendants, while engaged in conversation, laughing at the constable. The defendants denied that they were laughing. The magistrates sentenced them to three months' imprisonment, in default of finding bail for good behaviour. I say this may not be true, but it requires investigation."

Yes, Sir; certainly it requires investigation. I cannot conceive a fairer case for putting a question to the Solicitor General and getting a reply; but is it upon an allegation of this kind, as to which my right hon. Friend does not venture to offer an opinion, even though it is a true accusation, that we are to found a great Constitutional argument and to attack the Government of the country? Now, what was the answer of the Solicitor General? In the first place, it was not a prosecution under the Crimes Act at all. It was under the ordinary law. These young men were proved to have deliberately insulted the constable. They said to him, "You are a scoundrel. You are the meanest man in Ennis, and we shall soon kick you out of Ennis." The men were ordered to give bail. One man gave bail; the other refused to do so, and he was imprisoned in default. Well, now this is the proof of the iniquity of the Government, of the arbitrary character of the Crimes Act, and, of course, of the tyrannical cruelty and injustice which is proceeding in Ireland. Why, it is the most ordinary case in the world of a couple of rude roughs brought before a magistrate and ordered to find bail for good behaviour and sent to gaol in default. The only other case to which I wish to refer is that of Mr. E. Harrington, and which, as I have said, is the exception to the satisfactory reply of the Government to the charges against them. Mr. Edward Harrington, at all events, is a man of courage. He has gone to gaol, and he has taken his punishment bravely. He has not complained about putting on the prison clothes, and he has suffered all the penalties inflicted upon him, although we are told—and I daresay it is true—they involve some physical suffering. Well, Mr. Harrington committed an offence which I do not want to depreciate, and, being brought before the magistrates, he was sentenced to what I believe is the

utmost punishment allowed by law—namely, six months with hard labour. I think that a tremendous punishment, especially for a man of education. But that is not all. It is admitted that the Court offered Mr. Harrington to let him off altogether if he would give an assurance not to repeat the offence. I think two things follow from that. It shows that the Court was not vindictively inclined, but it shows that the Court was of opinion that the offence committed was of a kind which it was necessary to deter others from committing, but not of a kind which required penal infliction. There is all the difference in the world between punishment for the sake of punishment and for the sake of prevention. I confess it appears to me that this was a case in which the only punishment that was necessary was for the sake of prevention; and I do venture to urge the Government, in view of all the circumstances of the case, to especially consider the case of Mr. Harrington, and see whether it be not one to which the clemency of the Crown might be extended. I now pass to the other classes of complaint with regard to the prison treatment of prisoners under the Crimes Act. There is the case of Mr. O'Brien. I do not want to say much about Mr. O'Brien's case, especially in his absence, but I think it is fair to say this—that everyone who has seen him in this House must know, not only that he is a delicate man, but also a person of a rather excitable temperament; and it is quite possible, under the circumstances—the irritating circumstances in which he was placed the other day—that he may not have recollected all that passed. At all events we have to consider the statement, which, we are told, comes directly from him, and which was given to us by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). Well, but since then a paper has been laid on the Table of the House, to which we are entitled to pay some attention, and as to which all I am going to say is, that it conflicts very materially with the statement given to us the other day. This is a paper called for by the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy), and laid on the Table accordingly. It is a statement by the prison doctor (Dr. O'Farrell), and I will read the only passages which I think are in conflict with Mr. O'Brien's statement, and simply leave the matter to the judgment of the House. Dr. O'Farrell says—

"Mr. O'Brien was lying in bed on two mattresses, with a plentiful supply of good and new bed covering. Receiving me courteously, and affording me every facility for examining him, he expressed himself as feeling well, and seemed in very good spirits. In reply to my questions, he said he had every confidence in the skill and kindness of the prison medical officer."

That is the gentleman against whom the hon. Member for East Mayo brought the most extraordinary and violent accusations the other day. He said, I think, that in his opinion the conduct of this gentleman was infamous. Dr. O'Farrell continues—

"And that the friction which occurred with him last Thursday was owing to a misunderstanding on his own part. He stated that he had no complaint of any kind to make regarding his prison treatment; and that if the rule depriving him of his clothing had to be insisted on, he would say no excessive violence had been used in forcing it. On my remarking that it was not easy to measure the exact degree of force necessary once a struggle was provoked, as official, like other human temper, is, unfortunately, an imponderable quantity, Mr. O'Brien at once candidly said that the officials had displayed no temper on the occasion in question."

I shall say no more on that particular case, but I would submit that on the general question it is a fair subject for discussion whether the gentlemen convicted under the Crimes Act, or the majority of these gentlemen, should or should not be treated as first-class misdemeanants; and if a Bill or Resolution were brought before the House dealing with the subject I confess I should be inclined to support it. But it is perfectly beside the main issue to put forward as a reason for turning out the Government, that they have carried out the law as it exists at present. I think these charges are an attempt to avoid the main issue. They are an attempt to get a verdict from the country on a side issue, not by argument addressed to the understanding, but by an appeal to sensation and sentimental declamation. I do not agree for a moment with the statement in the Amendment of my right hon. Friend that the policy administered in Ireland is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain. ["Oh!"] I may be blind, but I do not see the point. It is true the right hon. Gentle-

man the Member for Newcastle said the other day there was an irresistible voice—that the hour had struck, and that the irresistible voice would sweep the Government from power. Well, I confess I do not hear the irresistible voice. I suppose the irresistible voice is to be found in what the Gladstonian papers dignify by the name of the "National Protest." I should like to ask my right hon. Friend whether he really is satisfied with the result of the latest atrocity agitation? I have been in a great number of agitations. I have witnessed them from near at hand. I am bound to say there is no agitation, in my opinion, in recent times which has been so little effective as this one. My right hon. Friend is more behind the scenes than I am, but it appears to me as if this irresistible voice was the voice of Mr. Schnadhorst, speaking through the Sub-Committees, the General Committees, the Executive Committees, and the Management Committees, whose operations he so ably controls. So far as I can see, the great heart of the people is beating with perfect tranquillity, in spite of all the agitation. But then, perhaps, my right hon. Friend relies upon recent elections. All I ask him on that point is to enter upon the study of comparative meteorology, and, if he does, he will find there is no case of any Government's being in power for the time this Government has been in power and losing so little. ["Oh! Oh!"] Well, I am quite certain that the Government of which I know most lost a good deal. We never took that view of by-elections when my right hon. Friend was in power. I do not think that they are any conclusive key to the current of public opinion; and I have really more faith in the good sense and intelligence of my fellow-countrymen than to believe that they will allow their opinions upon a subject which involves the highest interests to be changed by such miserable side-issues as these by which it is now sought to influence their decision. Now, Sir, I have dealt as far as I intend to deal with the first part of this Amendment. It is the only part—or else I should not have spent my time on it—with which the promoters of the Amendment have dealt up to the present time. I say with regard to it that the allegations are not proved, and if they were proved, they would not constitute in themselves a sufficient case for turning out the Government. If you want to do that, the only way is to produce an alternative and a better policy than their policy. And, again, I ask my right hon. Friends on this bench, when they speak at the concluding portion of this debate, to tell us what their policy is. [*Ironical laughter.*] Hon. Members below the Gangway think that this is a most laughable request to make. They are afraid, perhaps, that my right hon. Friend behind me would fall into a trap if he told the country what he would do with regard to the relations of the Government to Ireland if he were sitting opposite. I do not think that it is an unreasonable demand to make, and I will support it by a historical precedent. In 1868 there was a Conservative Government in power. There was coercion in Ireland and discontent in Ireland. My right hon. Friend was then the Leader of the Opposition. What did he do? He put before the country and the House a remedial policy for Ireland in all its details. That was the date when he told us of the upas tree with its three branches.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): I did not go into any details.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Well, he put before country the main principles of his policy. He spoke of the upas tree. He proposed remedial legislation in three branches—for education, for the land, and the Irish Church; and he promised that as the result of that legislation there should be content and union of hearts in Ireland. But my right hon. Friend did more than that. He put before the House a series of Resolutions upon the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Church. That is all we ask him to do now. Let him put upon the Table of the House and let us discuss Resolutions embodying the main principles of his Irish policy. We are perfectly ready to grapple with and discuss them, and possibly we may be able to agree. I say possibly. I admit that I am not so sanguine as I once was. In 1886 we knew perfectly well what my right hon. Friend's policy was. It was put before us in two Bills, and, of course, with great detail and elaboration. But we cannot discuss with you upon those Bills, because they are dead.

That is no longer the policy of my right hon. Friend. [Mr. GLADSTONE expressed dissent.] My right hon. Friend corrects me. Do I understand him to differ? Then what is the policy of my right hon. Friend? That is what I have been trying to get at ever since the Bills were defeated in 1886, and I have never got it to this moment. Now we know that these Bills, one of which we were told was abandoned, the other of which was to be altered in material particulars, and both of which were dead—that these Bills are now resuscitated and alive, and that they stand as the policy of my right hon. Friend. My right hon. Friend thinks that the opinion of the country or of the House is changed with regard to these Bills. Let him bring them forward again as Bills or as Resolutions, and we are prepared to discuss them again. Then it will be fair to ask the House to turn out the Government if it agrees with my right hon. Friend. But I confess that although we know now that these Bills contain the policy of my hon. Friend, we know also—because he has told us so himself—that there are to be important alterations in them. I assume that if he should challenge the House again upon this policy he will be prepared to tell us—and I do not see why he should not tell us in the present debate—what those alterations are. That is not asking for details, for the alterations affect the greatest principle—the principle which he has himself put into the forefront—the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. I think we have a right to ask for some information with regard to this question. I know it is no use to appeal to hon. Gentlemen; but I should like to appeal, through them, to the country, to consider what is the result of this policy of silence—of this abstinence from all information of which we can catch hold. I want them to see what a situation they are forging for themselves. Suppose that upon this Amendment they were successful. That is not very likely, but they must be successful sooner or later. [*Opposition cheers.*] You receive that as if it were a Heaven-sent communication. I wonder whether hon. Gentlemen were so absolutely hopeless of ever getting back into power that they are grateful for an intimation from me that at some time or other they must be successful. I suppose no Government can always remain in office, and when this Government, in the ordinary course of events, gives place to the Government led by my right hon. Friend, when that time comes which is so ardently desired by Members below the Gangway, then, at all events, my right hon. Friend will have to state his policy, and not merely the main principles of it, but the full details. I will suppose that he is successful in persuading the then House of Commons to adopt it. I will also suppose that he is successful in persuading the country to adopt it on the occasion of the second general election which must take place before a great constitutional change is made, and which it is perfectly certain would take place. Assuming that my right hon. Friend is perfectly successful on both occasions, even then I would ask him to consider what chance there is of a final settlement if it is to be, as it will be on this hypothesis, forced upon an unwilling but a powerful and energetic minority in Ireland, and if it is to be carefully watched, strenuously criticized, and persistently opposed by a powerful minority in this House and in this country? I do not believe, after all, if it were possible to look on this matter apart from Party interests, that any reasonable man would deny my proposition—namely, that there is no chance of any Party making a final settlement of this question without some sort of general assent. The only chance of a final settlement is where all the moderate men of all Parties agree. It is all very well in the heat of Party discussion to forget that; but although it is unsafe to prophesy, I prophesy with the most absolute certainty of fulfilment, that if you carry the old scheme, or any new Home Rule scheme, it will break down within six months under such opposition as I have indicated. If that is so, is it not worth while once more to see whether there be not some points on which we are all agreed? I am not speaking of myself—I am speaking of the moderate men of all Parties. Are there any points at all upon which the moderate men of all Parties are agreed, and the consideration of which offers a chance of further agreement? From time to time it is worthy the attention of the House of Commons to consider whether this is the case.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): Lay them on the Table.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I say that there are points of agreement upon which moderate men do agree even at the present time. Here is the first one. I believe that moderate men of all Parties agree in this—the primary importance of a settlement of the land question. Just note one thing in passing. Here we are discussing the administration of the Crimes Act, and a number of cases are brought forward. I notice that every one of those cases is an agrarian case, and has nothing whatever to do directly with the Home Rule question. I do not press that point too far. I am perfectly ready to admit that when you have settled the land question there may remain a very strong feeling in favour of Home Rule of some kind or other. I admit that, but I say if you could do away with the agrarian difficulty you would do away with the system of coercion and the necessity of such a debate as this, and all these cases of grievances which have been brought before the House. And, therefore, if my right hon. Friend has a land policy to propose which will secure these results, that would be a very proper thing to challenge the opinion of the House upon, and, if the Government did not adopt it, to turn them out. We are agreed as to the primary importance of such a question. I want to call attention to the language used by my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley). This is an extract which I know expresses his present view, but it is an extract which appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* of November, 1882. He then wrote—

"If there were no other check, the land question would stand in the way if we are to undertake Home Rule in such a sense as would satisfy Mr. Davitt and Mr. Dillon. Are we to make terms with the landlords beforehand? If so, what is the security that those terms will be observed?"

I just note, in passing, that this is precisely one of our difficulties about any proposal for the extension of local government in Ireland. We want to know what is the security that any terms we make will be observed. My right hon. Friend says now, "Oh, you have armies and navies, and by them you can control the Irish Parliament." But at any rate in 1882 he did not think so, because he put this question. He goes on to say—

"If not, are we prepared to see the landlords sent flying for their lives with bag and baggage? The land is the question that interests the Irish more than all other questions put together. What value would they set upon an arrangement which excluded this from the sphere of their own control? If it is not excluded, can we expect them to handle the interests of those whom they regard as their hereditary tyrants and most cruel oppressors with respect for property and interests that is exacted by public opinion in this country, where the dispossessed class happen to be powerfully represented? If this be a well-grounded apprehension, then some form of equitable expropriation must precede any effectual form of Home Rule."

Now, Sir, I say I agree with every word of that, and I believe it will be concurred in by every reasonable man. Is there what my right hon. Friend calls a reasonable form of expropriation which can be found and which will not involve excessive risk to the British taxpayer, because that is the only reason, so far as I know, which led any of us to oppose the Land Bill of my right hon. Friend; at all events, it was the primary reason. Well, is there such a plan? Can such a plan be proposed? I think there can be. Some hon. Members have just invited me to consider the subject of the Round Table. I observe that my right hon. Friend (Sir W. Harcourt), speaking last night at Derby, alluded to that celebrated Conference, and gave his own account of what took place there. Now, the proceeding of my right hon. Friend is very characteristic—characteristic of the proceedings of his Party in this debate. When I heard that my right hon. Friend was contemplating a statement as to the proceedings of the Round Table, I wrote to him to suggest that we should confer on the facts only—not upon anything else—in order that there might be an agreement, at least, upon the facts. It was open to each of us to make our own comments upon the facts; but I thought we might compare our respective notes of what took place at the time, and that that would avoid subsequent controversy. My right hon. Friend declined.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Why?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: My right hon. Friend says, Why? Because he preferred, as my right hon. Friend's colleagues appear also to prefer, to rely upon an *ex parte* statement.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The reason why I declined the proposal of my right hon. Friend was because, before he went to Scotland and demanded the publication of a secret proceeding, he never said a word to his colleagues about his intention to divulge, or to demand the divulging, of that secret, and I told him that, as he had chosen to take his own course without consulting us, we—I and my colleagues—took our course without consulting him.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The statement which my right hon. Friend has just made necessitates a further allusion to the matter, which I had intended to reserve for discussion in the public Press. It is quite true that my right hon. Friends accused me of challenging them and forcing their hands, and compelling them to divulge something which I suppose they did not want to divulge. But I have pointed out to my right hon. Friend, in correspondence, that the cause of the remarks of which he complains is to be found in a previous speech delivered some considerable time before by my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. Morley). Speaking at Ipswich in October, my right hon. Friend, in answer to some such request as that which I have made to-day to my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian that he would disclose his policy, said,—"My right hon. Friend Mr. Chamberlain knows what our policy is. He knew it at the Round Table;" and then he went on to condemn in the strongest possible terms what he called the Birmingham plan of Irish land settlement. Now, Sir, as it is my opinion, and as I think I shall be able to show, that the only plans which were discussed at the Round Table were the Birmingham plans, I think I was justified under those circumstances in protesting against the inferences which would be drawn from my right hon. Friend's statement, and in offering them my permission, at all events, to publish anything which took place at that Conference. Now, Sir, that is only a digression. I come back to my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. He has taken, as he has said, his own course. Well, that will necessitate my taking my own course. I cannot admit that the right hon. Gentleman's statement of our proceedings is adequate or accurate, and I shall take the earliest possible opportunity of correcting him in those particulars that I think to be material. But all I want to do now is to refer to this Conference for the sake of my present argument. I was dealing with the Land Question. I was dealing with the possibility of finding some scheme which might settle the Land Question, which might carry through an equitable expropriation without involving British credit. Well, now, one thing, at all events, is absolutely beyond dispute in connection with the Round Table. My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne said, the other day, if we were not in entire agreement we were at least in sight of one another. My right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, speaking last night, confirmed that statement. He even went beyond it, and said we were in substantial agreement. Well, what were we in agreement upon? What were the plans that were discussed at the Round Table? Were they the Bills of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian? Certainly not. Those Bills were laid on the shelf; they were never referred to. [SIR W. HARCOURT: Oh!] There was no reference whatever, and the discussion proceeded from first to last—["Oh, oh!"]—this is my statement—the discussion proceeded from first to last as regards the land question upon a plan which I submitted, which my right hon. Friend possesses at this moment in writing, and which, if anybody doubts me, I challenge him to produce; and, as regards Home Rule, it proceeded upon a consideration of the inter-provincial system of Canada, which is totally distinct from the plan of my right hon. Friend, and which I offered to accept as a basis of discussion in the debates upon the Home Rule Bill. Well, I say under those circumstances I am justified in asserting that, at all events, the plans which were discussed there were not the plans of my right hon. Friend. But, as regards Local Government, just consider for a moment what that means. Consider what the inter-provincial system of Canada is. The discussion turned upon a system under which, in the first place, there would have been a separate treatment of Ulster. It turned upon a system under which there would have been a representation of Irish Members at Westminster, and the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament would have

been maintained. It turned on a system under which the administration of the law—the appointment, that is to say, of the Judges and the magistrates—was to be in the hands of the Imperial authority, and not of the local authority; it turned on a system under which there were to be statutory provisions for protecting the private rights of every man, for preventing undue preference, either of classes or individuals, and for preventing the taking of any man's property without adequate compensation. And it provided, besides all this, for the continuance of an Imperial authority—not the Army; not the Navy—in order to see that those statutory provisions were observed by the local and subordinate authorities. I say that may be a bad system or a good system—I am not discussing that now. All I want to know is this—we were at that time within sight of one another upon that system—are we still within sight of one another upon that system? [*Cries of* "No" *from the Irish Members.*] Oh, you have changed your minds. [A Voice: "You have changed yours."] Well, who are the real Leaders of the Party? That may be the difficulty. I have my own opinion why the Round Table Conference came to an end, and it is not the opinion which was expressed by my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. I think there was a power behind the Throne which got uneasy at the negotiations, and accordingly they were brought to a premature conclusion. But I say again, if my right hon. Friends are still within sight of me upon these points, why don't they put their propositions in the form of Resolutions before the House and let us discuss them? I think it is very likely that we might find other persons to agree with us—perhaps persons on both sides of the House. Let us go a step further with regard to the land question. I have already called attention to the fact in another place that my right hon. Friend at a dinner party at which he spoke in London about the time of the Round Table Conference stated that, although he adhered to his original intention—that is, his land scheme of perfect security—yet that he admitted the strength of the objections to the use of British credit, and that he had come to the conclusion on reconsideration that plans might be found for carrying out the object without having recourse to British credit.

MR. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear; that is so. I never denied it.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Very well; my right hon. Friend is, no doubt, still of the same opinion. I do not say—I am not alleging that the plan which my right hon. Friend had in view was the plan which I submitted to the Round Table Conference, and which my right hon. Friend considers to be too ingenious and too impracticable; but, at all events, my right hon. Friend, if he does not accept my plan, has a plan of his own. He sees his way to the general lines of a plan which would affect this object, an object—and I want to bring the House back to this—which is essential to the success of your policy. You cannot have Home Rule without an effective and satisfactory Land Bill. With an effective and satisfactory Land Bill Home Rule would be robbed of half its terrors. Well, I say that if my right hon. Friend has a plan of this kind, and if he would produce it in this House for discussion, or if he would follow the course pursued on the Irish Church Question and put forward resolutions on the main lines of such a plan——

MR. GLADSTONE: I laid down no main lines for the Irish Church Disestablishment.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: My right hon. Friend says he did not give any main lines in his resolution about the Irish Church?

MR. GLADSTONE: No.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Well, I accept his statement. As regards what I am now speaking about, I wish—whether there be a precedent for it or not—he could see his way to give an indication to the House of the main lines upon which at least a land scheme might be carried, and I believe that by so doing he would render greater service to the House and to the country than any services that he has rendered during the long course of his political existence. If this land question were out of the way the greatest obstacle to further progress would be removed. Why? Does any one doubt for a moment that if the Land War were out of the way there would be any objection in any part of the

House at once to proceed with Local Government in Ireland, at least on the lines of the English and Scotch Local Government Bill. Surely hon. Members below the Gangway would agree that in a proposal for the settlement of the Irish Question a proposal for conferring Local County Government on Ireland must form a part? [*Mr. Morley here said something to the right hon. Gentleman in an undertone.*] Oh, yes; but that does not make any difference in the argument that Local Government for Ireland is necessary, whether it be carried out by an Irish Parliament or by the Imperial Parliament. All I say is, that if we got a land scheme which would end the Land War, then a Local Government System for Ireland presents no difficulties either by a Local or Imperial Parliament, and so far, at all events, you would settle the question. I have never made the slightest concealment of the opinion to which my right hon. Friend referred last night, and which I gave expression to at the Round Table Conference, and again and again in public speeches, that if you got as far as this you might go farther. I express my own opinion; but I have always thought that in these circumstances it would be possible, and it might be wise, to relieve this overworked Parliament by a system of delegation of some of its business. I do not believe in that case that there would be any difficulty or difference of opinion as to the subjects which should be submitted to any local assembly which might be created. There are certain subjects which would suggest themselves to the mind of every Member of the House—questions affecting Education, Temperance, Local Government, Public Works, and many other Questions, on which we could agree, which could be, in my opinion, most conveniently dealt with by Local Assemblies in Ireland, in Scotland, and perhaps in Wales. The difficulty does not arise there. I think myself it is worth while even for Home Rule Gentlemen to consider the difficulties which they have to overcome; and the difficulties which I think they have to overcome before they can succeed in persuading the House and the country to carry Home Rule are stupendous. The difficulties are twofold. In the first place, you have to devise some plan by which the system of the control of the Imperial Parliament may be maintained. My right hon. Friend told us we have got the Army and Navy. It is not enough to tell us that we have got the Army and Navy. We do not want to be out of one difficulty into another. We do not want, six months after the granting of Home Rule, to have to reconquer Ireland. I am not so certain as my right hon. Friend seems to think that it would be so easy a thing to accomplish; but whether easy or difficult we do not want to have to do it. And before we see our way clearly to granting these local liberties we ought to see our way to a means by which the control of Parliament may be given over to local authorities. The second point with which you have to deal—indeed it is the *crux* of the whole situation [*ironical laughter*]—there ought to be no jeering or laughing when this subject is mentioned; it is not the policy of wise men to jeer and laugh at difficulties of this magnitude—the next question with which you have to deal is the question of Ulster. When my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Armagh spoke the other day you laughed at his statement that there would be forcible resistance against the decrees of an Irish Parliament, and you seek to institute a similarity between a threat of resistance to an Irish Parliament and resistance to the Imperial Parliament. I say, at all events, that the two things stand on a totally different footing. I say that there is one thing which the Imperial Parliament has no moral right to do. If it chooses it has a perfect right to repudiate the allegiance of any part of the Empire. It has a right to send them adrift, to force them from us against their will; it has a right to say to Ulster "Go from us; we will not have you any longer among us;" but it has no right to transfer the allegiance of Ulster or any other portion of the United Kingdom against the will and the consent of that portion which is sought to be separated. Therefore, I say the case is quite different; and I say, further, that although hon. Members from Ireland ridicule in public the threats which are made they know in their hearts that those threats are serious. ["No."] Well, they may be going blindly into the ditch; but they know, and I know, that there would be such serious

resistance to a proposal to transfer the allegiance of Ulster to a Home Rule Parliament in Dublin that the whole of your work would be undone six months after it was completed. I am afraid that I have trespassed too long on the patience of the House. At all events, I have attempted to deal frankly with the Question before the House. I say that the object of my argument has been to show that the complaints of the administration of the Crimes Act are not proved, and if they were proved they would not justify a complete change of policy. They amount to an attempt to obtain a verdict from the people of this country on false issues; and I appeal to my right hon. Friends who may have to follow me in Debate to, at all events, place the future discussion on a broader, sounder basis, and to tell us, not in detail, but broadly, what is the policy which is to bring about the union of hearts which they ask us to anticipate, and to put that policy before us in a form in which we can meet them in discussion.

*Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): There has been one word constantly recurring in the able speech we have just listened to which I should like, if possible, to interpret—and that is the word "we." The right hon. Gentleman, speaking as if with authority, said what "we" are ready to do—what "we" are prepared to meet. Speaking with some slight experience, at any rate, of England, Scotland, and Wales, I do not quite understand what the right hon. Gentleman means by "we." I know the Party opposite; I know a strong Party in the House, though a diminishing one, which follows the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquis of Hartington); but I know nowhere out of Birmingham the Party for whom the right hon. Gentleman speaks. In 1884-5 the right hon. Gentleman could have used the word "we" with authority, for he then spoke in the name of nearly all the advanced Liberals and the great bulk of the Radicals of this country. I was one of those who looked to the right hon. Gentleman for leadership and guidance in a more advanced policy than even that of the Cabinet with which he was connected, and I was taught so to look at him by his own words—words which, if his leisure will permit him to remain in the House for a short time I shall have to call his attention to. But since 1886 I deny the right hon. Gentleman's right to speak for either the Radicalism or the Liberalism of this country. I am afraid that if any accident happened which separated the right hon Gentleman for a time, however short, from the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, who now sits beside him, he will find that he has not a friend among those whom he once denounced because they neither toil or spin. Nor has he claimed a right to be the Leader of any Party among whom I mix and mingle. The right hon. Gentleman rebuked the right hon. Gentleman who preceded him in the debate for not having risen to the height of the argument with which we have to deal; but the right hon. Gentleman descended himself to the Round Table instead of mounting to any argument that at all applied to the Amendment before the House. The right hon. Gentleman complains that there has been a discussion of petty details, and yet he occupied a considerable portion of his time with petty details personal to himself. and in petty details in reference to the various incidents which he said he intended to pass by. Now, what is the issue as raised by the right hon. Gentleman himself in the speech he has just delivered? The right hon. Gentleman has taken the House back to 1886, and has stated that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has said that there were only two alternative policies for Ireland—Coercion, or conciliation in the shape of Home Rule. Though the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Land Question was at the bottom of the difficulty, he refrained from making any proposal himself, notwithstanding his position of great authority, a Minister without portfolio, with all the leisure to bring any proposal forward, with all his influence to induce the other side of the House to vote for it. I would venture to suggest that the right hon. Gentleman has been reticent on the subject because he knew, as we all know who sit on this side of the House, and as the bulk of the English people know, that the redemption of Ireland, if it is to be merged in the Land Question, cannot be realized by those with whom he works and whom he supports in office. If the redemption of Ireland is to be

realized, it cannot be by the kind of gentleman who tampers with it on the one hand with its Ashbourne Acts, and which intimidates the people on the other with measures coercive in the highest degree. It can only be achieved by one man, to whom the Irish people have given almost their love, certainly their grateful trust. According to the right hon. Gentleman, coercion is very mild in Ireland. Three years and a half ago, the right hon. Gentleman—when he needed to make no provision against the inhabitants, when he would have been protected in the country by the love of the bulk of his townspeople—held these views:—

"Coercion is for an emergency. It is nonsense to talk of a Constitutional system and of a Constitutional Government if the Constitution is always being suspended. When the emergency is over, then it is the duty of wise Statesmen to seek out the causes of discontent and endeavour to remedy them"

Yes, but the Address says that emergency is over—that you have already had "salutary results" in the restoration of order and confidence in Ireland. But, in 1886, these were the only grounds taken by the right hon. Gentleman in the defence of coercion. He said—

"Murder, outrage, and assassination are things which no Government can tolerate. If these stalk the land, then it is the duty of the Government, at all risks and hazards to put them down, and from the measures of protection may be asked. I listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary introducing the Crimes Bill, and he did not pretend that the number of crimes of violence was larger than it had been. I have the memory of this House and the correction of Hansard behind me. His exceedingly able brother the Member who spoke on the Amendment to the Address, said, crimes of violence, because there was a powerful political organization in Ireland."

And this was the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) of the Party sitting opposite to him:—

"For myself I have very little confidence in the striking qualities of a Conservative Administration. I have had some experience on this point. The Tory Party to a man opposed the concession of equal rights and equal privileges to our Roman Catholic fellow subjects. The Tory Party to a man resisted the removal of duties which pressed upon the food of the food of the people. The Tories to a man resisted the extension of the suffrage. I do not believe in them as directors of the British Constitution or the British connection; and I believe in them the less because I am certain that no policy can conduce to more surely separation than persistence in opposition to opposition to reform, and a stupid reliance upon the brute force of Coercion as the only remedy. The Tory prescription has been tried for centuries, and it has failed conspicuously."

And I am going to vote for the Amendment because the right hon. Gentleman wants more doses of Coercion. He says—

"There are only 111 persons in gaol under the Coercion Act just now."

But where are the 1,900, the 2,000 imprisoned since the Act passed? They probably escaped his recollection, because I am sure the right hon. Gentleman is too fair a speaker to leave out the facts which tell against his case. He did not mention, when he was drawing attention to the thousand men who were imprisoned under Mr. Forster, and I opposed Coercion then as I have opposed it all my life—that they did not have their hair clipped or their beards cut, that they did not wear prison dress. He did not mention, galling and shameful as their imprisonment was, that it was very different to what it is now. There is no comparison between the treatment of prisoners then and now. While we find that Mr. Forster had the grace to let a Member out of prison on his pledged word to return, we have the answer of the hon. and learned Chief Secretary this afternoon in reference to a Member who may be ruined by legal proceedings against him and brought by one of their own agents, and who wished to see his legal advisers. They carefully sent him to a gaol away from his counsel and solicitors, and refused to allow him to be brought within easy reach of them. And the Chief Secretary, with that respect for the Representatives of the people which I hope a General Election will teach him to express in a different fashion—said he never heard of a gaol being brought nearer to the counsel and solicitors of the prisoner. But I have never heard tell of 25 Members of Parliament being in gaol, or being pursued by warrants, or about to go to gaol, or just come out of gaol. I have never heard of it under any Coercion Acts which have been acted upon. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) says, we are to vote against this Amendment because the allegations it makes are not true, and because the conciliatory alternative is inefficient. The allegation

is that the admistration of this Act is alienating the affections of the people. I have seen a few audiences during the last four or five months, rather more than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Those audiences were of the character which the right hon. Gentleman needs to address; and there are two names which spontaneously provoked expressions of disapprobation and aversion—the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and still more distinctly that of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain), I will tell you why. Those with whom I am associated and whose sympathies I have, rather take the view which the right hon. Gentleman himself took four or five years ago, that from the Tories you can only expect Toryism. Sir, from the man who professed Radicalism, and who stood in the front of the line and before others, they had a right to expect something else than desertion from their ranks. I have no right to put myself against one of his influential position, but in the Bull Ring of Birmingham, in a free meeting, if he would so far condescend as to allow myself and himself to take a verdict upon this Amendment I would undertake to carry it by 99 out of every 100 against him. We are asked, What is our alternative? It is that which the right hon. Gentleman himself taught us four years ago. The right hon. Gentleman spoke then about Coercion being no cure, and against Coercion being no remedy. He said—

"I believe that one of the greatest Irish problems is still before us, and we must wait for its solution in a new Parliament."

—that was what Parliament expected in 1885. Mr. Gladstone has removed two of the greatest grievances of Ireland. He has disestablished an alien Church, and he has reformed the Land Laws; but there remains a question as important, possibly more important than both those two. What was that question? The right hon. Gentleman said:—

"I have it in Mr. Gladstone's own words—(so he must be got at from this)—that it is the wisest possible self-government for Ireland which is consistent with the maintenance of the integrity of the Empire."

And that is our alternative. The second part of the Amendment says:—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that such measures of conciliation should be adopted as may bring about the contentment of the Irish people, and establish a real union between Great Britain and Ireland."

These may not be the words of the right hon. Gentleman, but the main principles are here; and he must have consulted, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian before he so expressed himself. Some nine months before the speech I have referred to, which those who were Members of Parliament in 1885 will never forget, the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the alternatives; but now he "wants his money back." "You have changed your minds," he says; but I say he has changed his speech. I don't accuse him of changing his mind; he is much too able and acute to change his mind suddenly on these things. But for years he has condemned Coercion, and has favoured the extension of local self-government to Ireland, not as to mere county rates or parochial matters, because you could not possibly speak of them as likely to be inconsistent with the integrity of the Empire. About the same date the right hon. Gentleman, praising the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) said, in addressing a London audience—

"Let us take the question of Coercion. Here we know what Lord Randolph Churchill's policy is, and I will say that to my mind it is a wise and statesmanlike policy. Lord Randolph Churchill does not believe, neither do I believe, in the efficacy of perpetual repression."

Yet to-night the right hon. Gentleman has not uttered a word of condemnation of that perpetual continuation of the Coercion Act talked about by the hon. Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson.) And the right hon. Gentleman went on to say:—

"Lord Randolph Churchill does not believe, neither do I, in the policy of perpetual preparation, and he favours, as I favour, the concession of Local Government to Ireland and a system on which Irishmen shall have some effective control over their own affairs."

This hardly means Local Boards. The Radicals have a right to complain, and I do complain on behalf of those who in 1886 were the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman, that that right hon. Gentlemans sits with us, and gives his help to those on the opposite side. He speaks of "we Liberals." We Liberals must do liberal things as well as use liberal

phrases; and even if disappointed by the failure of some petty plan we must not let that hinder the redemption of the country. Why was there no word in rebuke of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman? The hon. Member for North Armagh spoke of the "Coercion Act," describing it by its right name, and hoped it would permanently remain on the Statute Book. There was a time when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said, "For my part I hate Coercion; I hate the name and I hate the thing;" yet he is going into the same Lobby with the Party who wish to make it perpetual. The right hon. Gentleman endorses the complaint of the Chief Secretary as to the attacks made on the Government. They say they repudiate the horrible charges, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has said the Irish Members made worse charges against the Members of the Liberal Party. The talk about horrible charges hardly comes with a good grace from the right hon. Gentleman, who has been present at meetings and heard, without rebuke, charges of complicity with murder made against the Irish Members—charges since shown by the accessories themselves to have been based on forgery bolstered up by perjury. The right hon. Gentleman appealed through this House to the country. I appeal also to the country to answer him, and to say that the least we expected from him was that he would have made some inquiry on the matter. The right hon. Gentleman, using an unlucky phrase, spoke of the situation which the Irish Members had "forged." I speak of the situation which the allies of the Government have employed others to forge, using the word forge only in the sense of the right hon. Gentleman. They have forged a situation from which they will escape with great difficulty; because those outside are beginning to think, and Members sitting on the Opposition Benches are beginning to be afraid of a situation which has been forged by forgery bolstered up by perjury—I dare not say by subornation of perjury—although £500 and £1,000, and £1,700 and £2,000 have been paid for statements which, if true, ought to have been furnished without any monetary inducement. What would be said of an Irish Member who could be shown to have given a witness large sums to give evidence? I remember, when the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) got up in the House and denied the genuineness of these forgeries, his denial was received with laughter from the Ministerial Benches—and now that this accusation, which is intended to murder the political reputation of the hon. Member for Cork, and through him assassinate the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid-Lothian has failed, we have a half-hearted withdrawal and an expression of regret, that sounded very much like regret that the letters were not genuine, and an utter absence of that fulness and frankness of apology which might naturally have been expected. The country will watch the Division List on this Amendment, as showing those who desired to make themselves parties to such conduct. The Conservative Party was once a great and chivalrous Party, and would not have acted thus. They have now been using as a Party weapon at every election "Parnellism and Crime," and I want to ask a Question of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, at least, has Liberal traditions. You have used it as a Party weapon. In every election "Parnellism and Crime" has gone round, and I want to ask the First Lord of the Treasury—or, as he is not here, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, at least, has Liberal traditions—one or two questions. But before I do so I should like to praise some of the conduct of the Government. A man named Molloy was called before the Commission, and the Government thought it their duty to at once prosecute him instead of waiting, as is usual, till the close of the labours of the Commission before doing so. They prosecuted him because they thought he had committed perjury. I am sure it was only desire for truth that instigated the prosecution; there was no intention to suggest that others had induced the man to commit perjury; it was only desired that all witnesses should have the terror of the law before them. But is the balance of justice to be equal? Is the Government going to deal with other perjurers as they have dealt with Molloy? Will they institute prosecutions for the printing of letters bought

with the money of persons making charges, bought without inquiry as to where they came from, with a careful shutting of the eyes which, in ordinary cases, would be evidence of conspiracy? Will the Government instruct the Attorney General to lay a criminal information against the *Times* for a most infamous libel, used for the purpose of distorting the policy of the House and inducing it to believe that some of its Members were bad men who should not be trusted? Will the Government give instructions that proceedings be taken against that interesting gentleman, Mr. Houston, who, it is clear, knew before he got into the witness-box that there was something suspicious about some part of Pigott's case? If Houston concealed this from the Attorney General he deserves indictment. I have too much respect for the Attorney General, from whom I have received some courtesies, to believe for a moment that he had had the faintest suspicion of the truth; the contrary would be so absolutely shocking, so thoroughly terrible, that the disgrace would cling to him for life. I acquit him thoroughly—no English gentleman, with such knowledge, could have put Houston in the box and allowed him to make a statement without putting some question which would give a clue to it. But then Houston ought to be prosecuted by the Government, if only to clear themselves and the Attorney General from complicity; and if this is not done I shall make it a charge against the Government on every platform in the country that they prosecuted Molloy because they thought it would damage the defendants, and refrained from prosecuting those who stood self-convicted, because they had been associated with themselves. Office may be held at too high a price. Past Conservative Leaders would not have hesitated for a moment to have washed their hands of this business. It is not as if it did not already concern the House, for it has been used at every election to influence voters. It is no question of land redemption or of solution of the agrarian problem that has been urged so much. It is that Mr. Parnell wrote the letters; he must have written them, or he would have taken legal proceedings before. Anything, in fact, was said that was likely to secure the support of the weak-backed Liberal Unionist; and it had its effect at some of the elections. At this moment, when we are dealing with this question, are we to be told by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that the right hon. Member for Central Bradford did not rise to the grandeur of the debate? Was the right hon. Gentleman present when the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh spoke? Grandeur of debate! The Journals of the House record the fact that 280 years ago payments were made to various officials, including the Serjeant and the "old fool" of the House. It does not appear when the Office ceased, but after hearing the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh I understood why there was no need to keep it up. The right hon. Member has spoken of the feeling of the country. I desire to speak with all respect of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale for his ability and integrity. It is with grief and sorrow that Liberals break from him. But, at the noble Lord's last meeting with his constituents, the vote of confidence he received and returned thanks for was coupled with the unanimous expression of the desire of his supporters for an immediate and wide extension of local government to Ireland. And when two powerful statesmen like the noble Lord, and at some distance the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, keep a Government in power whose traditions are not the traditions of those who elected them, whose desires are not the desires of those who elected them, the responsibility is rather theirs, and the country looks to them. It looks to the noble Lord in the hope that even now the judgment, which in the traditions of this House and of all those who bore his name, has usually been associated with the effectuation of English liberty, might give to Ireland the possibility of it. To the noble Lord's Colleague we do not so look. We know there is no way to agreement, and Radicals desire to see that right hon. Gentleman in the Tory Government to which he belongs. They have no desire and no wish for the return of the right hon. Gentleman; for when the hour comes they do not want that in the midst of a great battle, upon which the happiness of a nation depends, the

lieutenant general shall have the chance in the thick of the fight of throwing away his sword and uniform, although he is for the principle, because he does not like the fit of the epaulettes or the fashion of the hilt.

*MR. M. W. MATTINSON (Liverpool, Walton): I cannot see how the personal attack made by the hon. Member for Northampton upon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham can help us in the consideration of this Question. The hon. Member, too, has made impassioned references to the proceedings before the Special Commission. I am not altogether surprised at it, and as far as I am concerned, speaking only with reference to the only point on which a judgment can now be arrived at, I have no hesitation in admitting that the hon. Member for Cork has been greatly wronged, and, I believe, there is a universal desire on all sides of the House—on the Ministerial side as much as anywhere else—that those who have repeated a particular charge should make ample reparation of a full and large apology. But that does not affect the facts of the situation with which we have to deal. The personal integrity of the hon. Member for Cork has nothing whatever to do with the administration of Ireland; it has nothing whatever to do with the question whether we shall have two Parliaments and two Governments. I am not going to say that during the past two years, there may not have been some miscarriage of justice in Ireland, or that changed conditions may not justify a call for some modification of the policy of the Government; but I shall vote without hesitation against the amendment because, on a balance of considerations, I have no doubt that the present course of events amply justifies the action of the Executive. The broad fact that crime has been largely reduced, and substantial progress made in the reassertion of the law is the vindication of the Government and outweighs my mistakes which may have been made here and there. The charges against the Government appear to range themselves under three heads; first, arrest in the United Kingdom of Irish politicians; second, conviction in Ireland of Irish Members; and third, their treatment in prison. As to the first, it is clear that no injustice has been done to the individuals affected. The selection of time and place for arrests may have been stupid blunders, but that is a matter between the Chief Secretary and his supporters and not for hon. Gentlemen opposite. I believe that the action of the Government in this respect has been perfectly legal and just; but I question whether it was worth while to cause an Irish Member, against whom a warrant had been issued, and who was a fugitive from justice in this country, to be brought back into the jurisdiction of the proper tribunal in Ireland. Irish Members in this country might perhaps be a nuisance to the Government of the day, but while they are here they are not disturbing the peace of Ireland, and therefore the desired results, so far as the peace of Ireland is concerned, could be obtained by allowing them to remain in England without arresting them. A Member who has a warrant out against him will not cross the Channel, because he knows that by doing so he would have to walk straight into an open prison. It has been said that what it is possible to do in England is illegal in Ireland. My answer to that is, that you can with impunity do that in England which is harmful in Ireland. The policy of the Government should be to keep persons away from places where they do mischief. I refuse to support the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, because I hold that while there may be a question as to the absolute necessity of arresting Irish Members on English soil, yet in my judgment there is no question about the legality or the justice of it. The second point is that the convictions in Ireland have been unjust. Now, I say, with regard to the charge that harsh sentences have been inflicted under the Crimes Act, it is difficult to pass a sound opinion in any case unless we have all the facts before us. In the case of Mr. E. Harrington, the penalty strikes me as being very severe. It is the maximum penalty, and it is imposed for an offence which was not one of the most aggravated kind. My difficulty in the matter has not been removed by the suggestion which has been made that, but for a technical point raised, Mr. Harrington would have been convicted of something else. Why did he not appeal? And on this question generally I must

say that, so far as I can make out, there never has been any real or substantial ground for the suggestion that the County Court Judges are not perfectly fair. I think that, taken as a whole, the Resident Magistrates do discharge their duties with impartiality and average intelligence. There is one other ground of accusation taken up by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Morley), and that is in regard to the treatment of Irish prisoners. I hope hon. Gentlemen opposite will believe me when I say that I personally have felt it to be a most humiliating circumstance that hon. Members of the House of Commons, men of culture, should be subjected, in the ordinary course of the operation of the law, to the treatment of which we have heard so much. But I cannot find anything in that treatment on which to found a charge against the Government. Hon. Members say that political opponents ought to be treated differently from other persons. Perhaps they ought; but, after all, that is a question for consideration of Parliament and not of the Executive Government. I take it that when the Crimes Act was passed Parliament determined that, in certain circumstances, offenders should be subjected to certain treatment. I can quite understand the agitation for a change of the law, but I cannot understand why the present accusation should be brought against the Government. If the Chief Secretary alters the treatment of Mr. O'Brien and the other Members of Parliament now in gaol, he must, in common justice, alter the treatment of every one committed to prison for similar offences. Where would that land us? In the position that the Chief Secretary must make a wholesale dispensation in respect to Crimes Act prisoners. But at present you cannot make it a ground for definite accusation against the Chief Secretary that he will not take upon himself the dispensing with the punishment prescribed by a Statute passed so recently and after full consideration. While I say this, I desire to add that I think prison treatment, not only in Ireland, but in England also, is a matter which may fairly come under review. I cannot doubt that it would be quite possible to deal with political prisoners in a way which might not be unsatisfactory even to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. There are only a very few words more which I wish to say. Some of the hon. Gentlemen sitting around me have tendered to the Government advice. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) has, for instance, suggested that the Crimes Act ought to be strengthened, and another hon. Friend of mine has suggested that the administration of the law in Ireland ought to be more rigorous—that prosecutions ought to be quicker. I should be sorry to administer the Crimes Act with greater stringency than it is administered at present. I have always understood it is a maxim in the administration of the criminal law that in proportion as crime diminishes, so the necessity for stringent punishment diminishes. The case which we make against the amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) is that crime has largely diminished. If that be, as I believe it is, a true representation of the present condition of Ireland, it seems to me the logical outcome is this, that the time may soon come when it may be possible for the Government, consistent with the safeguarding of the interests committed to their care, to abate the rigour of their administration of the Crimes Act.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I think the hon. Member for Liverpool deserves a word of acknowledgment from this side, because I think he has been the very first—at all events, the hon. Member very frankly and very honourably did express it—to express from that side a feeling of regret, and almost of repulsion, at the treatment hon. Members had had to undergo. I congratulate him upon that, and I live in the hope that he will be followed in his expression of opinion by many of the gentlemen of England before long. He also showed the first faint indications of distrust in the policy of the Government he supports. He could not help saying that he did not like the arrest of Irish Members in England, and he said he would be glad if it could be avoided in future. Well, for my part, I hope you will go on in that way. You cannot better play our game, or bring home more forcibly to the minds of English people what your Coercive Policy means. When an hon. Member like Mr. Carew goes down to an English

constituency he wins all hearts by his frankness and fairness, staying in our houses he endears himself to us all. He addresses a crowded meeting, and then he is hurried off by the police. The next thing the people who know him and love him hear about him is that he has been knocked down, stripped, and treated like a common felon. This brings home to the English people and Scotch people appreciation of what Coercion is much better than we can. If we could bring home to the people what the policy pursued for so many hundred years by Liberal and Conservative Governments alike really is, there would be a very short end made of Coercion. Then the hon. Member for Liverpool could not quite swallow Mr. Harrington's sentence of six months' imprisonment with hard labour, and, as I understood him, considered it too severe for the offence he had committed. Nor did he like the prison treatment. I think gradually you will find, as the time for the General Election draws near, there will be a good deal of discontent of this sort expressed by hon. Members who represent large constituencies and come into touch with the people of the country. The hon. Member for Liverpool said we had no right on this treatment of prisoners to found an indictment against the Government. Well, but in the first place, the Chief Secretary, has entire control of prison discipline in Ireland. We are convinced that he has power of interference, and if we needed a convincing argument in support of that conviction he has himself supplied it, by his intervention in allowing priests to wear their own clothes in prison. You will not get many people to understand why there should be an intervention of this kind in favour of parsons and not of Members of Parliament. Well, for about the five hundredth time we are again face to face with our old own chief difficulty, the Government of Ireland. Disguise it how you like, the debate may take a particular line on one occasion, and a different line on another, but every year the same question crops up, and I suppose I may say that four-fifths of the House of Commons would agree as to what they are aiming at. We recognize all of us the national danger of a continuance of this state of things, and in different ways desire to bring about a different state of things. Nearly all of us long for the pacification of Ireland, it is only upon the methods of bringing about that desired result that we differ. I say nearly all, for there is a small section of bitter Orangemen whom I would not include among those who wish and desire such a settlement. I am comparatively a young Member of the House, but I have heard Orange Members talk of putting their heel on the necks of their countrymen. I have heard the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, who, I suppose, I must regard as a serious politician, say that he not only rejoiced in the Crimes Act being in perpetuity, but he would like to see imprisonment under it made perpetual too. With such men, holding such opinions, there can be no truce, no parley. I do not include them in my opinion that there is an earnest desire on both sides of the House to bring this long and bitter quarrel to an end. It does not much matter what you say or do, we are but servants of the people, and our masters have made up their minds. Coercion is doomed, and you know it! You may cling to it a little longer, but there is a great difference in Coercion now to what it used to be. Coercion in the old days was with no democracy, but now you have to satisfy a democracy who are masters, with votes, of the justice, wisdom, and righteousness of your policy; and you have not satisfied them. A straw will show which way the wind blows, and there are several straws to show it now. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has given you a little Radicalism wrapped up in a certain sort of way, and I did not notice that you cheered him much. You do not quite trust that right hon. Gentleman; you cannot quite forget the doctrine of ransom; you remember his reference to those "who toil not, neither do they spin;" yet the right hon. Gentleman knows how to turn his barque to every favouring wind. In Scotland he warned you in pretty plain language that a policy of Coercion was a negative policy, and would not commend itself much longer to the people of this country. The uncontested election at Burnley is another straw that shows the direction of the wind, and you will have other in-

dications before long. The country has made up its mind that Ministers who will not put an end to a policy of Coercion and try something of a different character must clear out and make room for those who will, and the country will express its meaning more clearly as time goes on. It is no question of detail, of this Bill or that, it is begging the question to raise the question of the old Home Rule Bill, whether it is alive, or dead, or in a state of suspended animation. The country cares nothing for points such as these, we are long past such. The supremacy of Parliament was the great thing, and I was one of those who voted—and I would do it again under similar circumstances—who voted against the old Home Rule Bill. The supremacy of Parliament, the absolute supremacy of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, is what I and others insisted upon. I think I can show by an extract from a speech of one of the ablest of the Liberal Unionists what a hollow sham this contention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham is. The speech I refer to was delivered by the hon. and learned Member for Inverness on May 21st, 1886. He said—

"If this demand for the retention of the Irish Members were conceded"—

Now mark this—

"it would be found by logical sequence to be a measure to which the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale nor any other Member on this side of the House would have any objection."

The retention of Irish Members has been given up, and the opposition of the hon. Member for Inverness has not been pacified. Why? The House knows perfectly well that all we asked for in the way of criticism on the Home Rule Bill of 1886, all the reasonable requirements—certainly all the criticisms I made—have long since been given in to by the Leaders of the Liberal Party. But where are the pledges given in the election of 1886? [*Cheers.*] I am glad to hear that cheer, it enables me the more easily to allude to a personal matter, with which I hardly dared to trouble the House. In my absence the hon. and learned Member for West Ham, speaking of my conduct, said I had been returned pledged to support a Government I had not once voted for, and that I was returned without a contest because I stood as a Liberal Unionist. Well, my answer is two-fold. First of all to stand as a Liberal Unionist means to stand with the support of Tory votes, and if necessary to fight a brother Liberal. I put myself in the hands of the Liberal Three Hundred, and I was asked practically unanimously to fight their battles again. I said I was a foe to coercion of any sort or kind, and that I never would be a party to it. I said that in my election address. I said, while I objected to certain details in the Home Rule Bill, I was earnestly in favour of a large and generous measure of local self-government for Ireland. Ah! we all said that. I have stood on Liberal platforms to help brother-Liberals, and I do not think there was one of them who did not pledge himself to "a large and generous measure of local self-government for Ireland." I can clear myself in another way. One of my chief supporters, the man who preceded me in the representation of the division, the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Trade, had the honour and courage to state publicly and quite recently that the Conservatives had no right to find fault with me for any breach of faith; for I had said and done merely what I said I would do in my election address. I am sorry to trouble the House with such a trifle as my consistency. The hon. and learned Member for West Ham was inaccurate and misinformed; probably he had been in communication with some of the *Times'* witnesses. The country is not asking about this Bill, or that. With all critics and doubters, with men who are throwing clouds of doubt in the eyes of the people by saying "What will a Liberal Government do; what do you mean by conciliation?" the country has no concern. The country says, "We are sick and tired, humiliated and disgusted with this perpetual recurrence to a policy of force, and are thoroughly resolved, if you will not devise the means of carrying out a policy of conciliation upon which we have set our hearts, you must make room for those who will." It is a policy of negation, says your ally, and he warns you it will serve your purpose no longer. It is the happy state of good will and comradeship that has sprung up between the

two peoples that has beaten you and confounded all your designs. It is this feeling of goodwill and comradeship which has sprung up between the two democracies makes the Union safe to-day; it is this feeling that makes the United Parliament supreme to-day; but not to this but the next Parliament do they look forward. You have not sought their confidence; this Parliament can claim no debt of gratitude. From Irish Members, certainly, you can claim no gratitude; but they look forward with hope, belief, and confidence to the next Parliament, and the electoral battle in which the two democracies will take part. The result of your administration is fatal to all your pretensions to govern Ireland with a strong hand. You have done your best to goad the people to madness; you have imprisoned their Leaders, and treated them with ignominy when you have got them in your power. You have stifled free meetings and free expression of opinion, and having driven them from the Constitutional method of expressing their complaints, what wonder that the complaints of the people find expression in languge not so Constitutional? I do not wonder; it is astounding how little outrage there has been, it is marvellous considering that the people are not educated that they have exercised so much self-control. How have you treated them in Ireland? Your Prime Minister calls them Hottentots, and your Chief Secretary is never tired of talking of them as the descendants of the rebels of '98 and '48, and telegraphs to his police, "Do not hesitate to shoot," and delights in telling the Constabulary, all of whom read his words, "If you fire be sure you kill." This is what you have done in Ireland. This is the Christian administration of the Government of a Christian people! I tell you the Christian people of England and Scotland loathe and abominate what you have done in Ireland. With the aid of the Loyal and Patriotic Union you have flooded town, village, and hamlet with pictures of horror and hateful calumnies of the Irish leaders. You have flooded every town, village, and hamlet in the country with millions of phamplets containing the most hateful calumnies of the Irish people and pictures of horrors. You have sent down paid lecturers to blacken the character of the Irish people and of their leading men. You have resorted to calumny of the basest description, to gross exaggeration, misrepresentation and abuse, and some of those who work with the Government, and are in tone with the Government, have not stopped short of forgery itself. Yes, the Loyal and Patriotic Union has done its level best to stifle the goodwill that was growing up between the two people and giving hope for the future. That has all gone off like water from a duck's back; but in spite of it a feeling of affection is growing up in the hearts of the Irish and English nations. You have blackened the characters of the Irish Members; you have distorted their motives and done your best to favour old bigotries, but it is all of no use. Macaulay, in his essay on Milton, says—

> "We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages the more assured we feel that the revolution was necessary. The violence of these outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people, and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live."

[*A laugh.*] The Tories, the less educated of them, laughed at Macaulay at that time. The better educated of the Tories of this day do not, as a rule, laugh at Lord Macaulay now. Lord Macaulay expresses the feeling of the English people, and that is why you fail to arouse them by your tales of outrage and crime. They are a liberty-loving people, and they believe that liberty is far better than restraint. When you speak of law and order they reply, "Your law was obtained under false pretences; you had no mandate from us to make such a law. You told us that you were opposed to Coercion, and the moment we entrusted you with power to make law, you proposed Coercion." That is one of the answers to the argument of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. At every Unionist platform we were told it was a calumny to say that there were only two alternatives—Home Rule or Coercion. There was a third; but the right hon. Gentleman turning to the Irish Members said, "you have made the third course impossible." They took to Coercion very quickly, like a duck taking to water. That is my first reply to the right hon.

Gentleman. The second is that you passed this law in the teeth of the protests of three of the four component parts of the Empire. The Scotch people said they would not have it; the Welsh and Irish also resisted it, and you passed it by the *clôture*. You passed it, denying to afford a reasonable time to discuss it, and you passed it even then under the falsest of pretences. There is a speech of the Chief Secretary to be found in *Hansard* in which the right hon. Gentleman said:—

"They (the Government) always denied that it was intended by the Bill to interfere with the relations of landlord and tenant. This was a Bill to put down crime. It was not conflicts between landlord and tenant in which they desired to interfere; it was not combinations which they desired to crush, but it was crime which would not be tolerated in any other country on earth, and which ought not to be tolerated in Ireland."

Having got it under these pretences you have used it to put down combinations, and for no other purpose than to assist the landlord in his quarrels with his tenants. That was your position at the time of the General Election (*Ministerial cries of* "No"). If it was not, why do you now object to face the people. They tell you, lastly, that respect and reverence for law depends on what the moral weight of the law itself is. The law-breakers of the world have many of them been the heroes of the world. John Brown was hanged legally; Hampden, Pim, Cromwell would have been living if they had not been successful; and the same may be said of Garibaldi, who went sword in hand to Naples; Magguire and Kossuth [An Hon. MEMBER: Kossuth was not successful]. No, he had to take refuge in free England; your fathers cropped the ears of dissenters quite legally; my grandfather was imprisoned for many years in Newgate gaol, quite legally, for preaching a sermon; at present you only clip the hair and moustache of your opponents. You are getting ashamed of the old method, and your children will be ashamed of your method as you are of that of your ancestors. The prisons of the world are now objects of curiosity. If you go to Rome the first thing you go to see is the prison in which Peter and Paul were imprisoned; if you go to Bedford your first visit is paid to the prison in which John Bunyan was confined; so also at Southampton where Isaac Watts was put. I do not defend every act that has been done in Ireland. I have never failed to say that I cannot agree with every doctrine of the Plan of Campaign, but I maintain that the Plan of Campaign was the result of your policy. You drove the Irish people from Constitutional usages into illegal courses, and then followed the old system of repression, punishment, and brutality. But, in spite of all this, there is a brighter prospect just now. It is because the people of the two countries love each other and trust each other; it is because the people have listened to Ireland's sons and believe their story, and believe in their future, that I, for one, shall vote for the amendment of my right hon. Friend.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): The speech of the Hon. Member who has just addressed the House is chiefly interesting from his references to the action of Members on this side of the House. He says that he has some difficulty in reconciling their opinions as avowed before the constituents with their practices in this House. I myself have been constrained to rise owing to the challenge which was thrown out yesterday by the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing) as to a recent incident in Lancashire; but nothing had happened in the history of this movement which had brought more discredit and ridicule upon it in the minds of the working classes than that incident. I am sure that the House will desire to get as far away as possible from the recrimination which formed the staple of the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down. The Amendment of the right hon. Member for Newcastle seems to me to raise a false and illogical issue. It is a perfectly arguable point, no doubt, that the Act has operated harshly and severely on certain men; but I contend that it is not an arguable position to maintain in the House of Commons that the duty of the Executive is to interfere with the administration of the Crimes Act or of any other Act in order that certain classes of offenders should be given a different treatment from certain other classes. To give the Executive power to discriminate offenders would be to resort to the practices of the middle ages. How could Parliament prevent the Chief Secretary

for Ireland under such conditions from treating offenders according to his private preferences and political views? To ask the House to consent to such a state of things is to ask it to consent to a very great offence against all legal and political principles. The Executive in Ireland, so far as the decisions of the Irish Courts are concerned, are in precisely the same position as the Executive in England; the treatment of prisoners is governed by Statute and if the Executive chooses to interfere with the decisions of the Courts of law, it unquestionably commits a breach of the law, and must do so at its own peril. I understand that during the late Administration there were two cases in which the Home Secretary did feel it his duty to interfere with the functions of the Prisons Board and the discipline of the prisons in favour of particular persons, but I believe myself that such action was entirely contrary to law, and that the Home Secretary did these acts at his own peril. It is said that the Irish Courts of Law themselves have interpreted the Statute in an unnecessarily cruel manner, and in a way that was never contemplated by Parliament, but I maintain that it is impossible to review the decisions of the Courts, unless you have the witnesses and the evidence before you. How is it possible for this House at any time to constitute itself into a Court of Justice? There is a proper appeal in all cases, and I think it is a great pity that when a Bill was passing through the House, one or two Amendments suggested from the opposite benches were not adopted. I think their adoption would have made a great difference in the sentimental grievance which is now alleged. It would have been a great improvement in the legal administration of justice in Ireland if the Resident Magistrates had been appointed during good behaviour, so as to avert the least suspicion of their being at the mercy of the Executive. Further, there might with advantage have been a rota of these magistrates, so that there would not have been always particular men to try particular cases in particular districts. Again, as to the question whether the victims of the Crimes Act have been treated by the prison officials with unusual and undeserved cruelty, much has been said on this subject, which is more a form of buffoonery than of serious argument. It is said, for instance, that for persons convicted of certain offences to be compelled to travel third class instead of first class is a grievous indignity. I myself always travel third class, and if those who make these complaints themselves travelled third class more frequently they would know the feelings of the British democracy better than they do. Mr. Rider Haggard, in his novel, "King Solomon's Mines," mentions a party who were interrupted by savages whilst one of the party was shaving, and had just half completed that operation. As the savages had never before seen a man with hair on only one side of the face, they deemed him to be a god and began to worship him. The difficulty of the position was that as the man had been recognised as a god by the fact that he had hair on one side of his face, he was obliged to go about amongst them ever after carefully shaved on one side only. It seems to me that this is an extremely opposite comparison to make. However much hon. Gentleman may shout "hear, hear!" the working men of Lancashire, many of whom take the same view of politics that they do, only laugh and ridicule the hero whose heroism depends on a circumstance of that kind. Having said this much, it seems to me that one has gone over the three different divisions, at all events of the difficulty as presented by my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle. In the first place, the question of whether the Executive is justified or not in interfering with the course of justice, by apportioning penalties according to its own individual whim and fancy and not according to the rigid law, I think most Members will agree with me that a more dangerous position was never put before an assembly of politicians. In the next place, it is an equally dangerous position to maintain that this House is either a fit or a competent tribunal to revise the decisions of Irish Courts of Justice whether humble or superior. Having provided the proper machinery to prevent injustice I think they ought to abide by it. I qualify that by saying that there are some amendments which I should have liked to have seen incorporated in the Crimes Act, and, as far as I myself am con-

cerned, it would have been a great pleasure to me to have voted for such Amendments if they had been presented to the House, because I feel that they would have been reasonable. In the third place. I cannot help thinking that when we test those cases of cruelty by the facts that we presented they are reduced to such rediculous proportions that it is really monstrous that a great Party in the State should put them forward as grounds of grievance. I am tired and weary of this perpetual application to Ireland of a law which I feel to be necessary if the State and society are to be held together, and I wish and hope that the time may come, very speedily, when we may devote ourselves if possible to something rather more in accordance with our hopes and our ambitions. I should very much like to see, at a time not very far off, Ireland left to decide a great number of local questions such as we see remitted in this country to different localities. It would, I feel, be a great advantage if we could put aside some of those angry recriminations and approach the problem along more rational lines. Whether that comes about now or later on, I feel most certain that one thing we must maintain at all hazards, and that is the law, and whether we maintain it here or it is maintained from a Parliament in Dublin society can not exist, but will really be planted upon a basis of anarchy unless this prime factor is maintained at all hazards. It is because I feel that this is neither an English nor an Irish question, but one upon which all politicians should share the same feeling, that I shall vote with the greatest possible confidence against the Amendment of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, which raises issues which are utterly false and utterly misleading.

MR. REID (Dumfries, W.): I feel no doubt that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Salford has spoken with the very best intentions, and that the policy which has been afflicting Ireland and distressing this country must be distasteful to him. But the hon. Gentleman has certainly been somewhat backward in his action on this matter, because when some of the Amendments which he himself has said he should like to see introduced into the Coercion Act as at present administered were proposed, he did not vote in favour of them.

MR. HOWARTH: The Amendments to which I refer were cut out entirely without debate.

MR. REID: They were cut out in consequence of a system of closure far more drastic than any ever proposed by a Liberal Government, and that closure was supported by the hon. Member himself. I trust the hon. Member now recognises the serious consequences arising from that Act. I am astonished that the Chief Secretary, than whom there is no man endowed with more literary grace and probably literary attainments in the House, should go down to Glasgow and Dublin and speak in the tone and the spirit that he has adopted about brother Members of the House placed in prison. If the right hon. Gentleman did not feel it himself, from his own instinct, when he dwelt upon the severity of the language with which he spoke of Mr. Mandeville after that gentleman's decease, no words of mine can convey the feeling. But I am satisfied that when the passion of this argument and controversy has a little gone by, the right hon. Gentleman himself will regret, and I think he will be ashamed of the tone in which he has spoken. I wish to say a few words in regard to the very remarkable speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I presume that he represents the Liberal Unionist Party, and I think after the peculiar conduct and position of Members of that Party we are entitled to know whether he does represent the opinions of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, or whether we have two leaders of the Liberal Unionist or dissentient Liberal Party—the one who makes speeches of a *quasi*-Radical kind in this House, and the other who enters into private negotiations with the Government and aids and abets them in the most Tory part of their proceedings. When the charge is made that one integral part of the United Kingdom is administered by unjust laws, unjustly applied, that men by the score are sent to prison without fair trial, and also that when they are in prison they are subjected to treatment unworthy of a civilized nation, the right hon. Gentleman appears to think that that is a matter of no importance. With-

out discussing whether it is true or not, I think we can gauge the true depth of the Liberalism of the right hon. Gentleman. He says we may be of opinion that the Government is grossly abusing its powers; that the Executive is in dangerous contact with the judicial officers; and that injustice is thereby wrought; and yet that is no ground, if it only applies to Ireland, for turning the Government out of Office; it is only a ground for a Committee to make inquiry into particular cases. The Solicitor General for Ireland has congratulated the House that no one makes charges against the Resident Magistrates now. Well, no one has made charges against any class so much as Resident Magistrates. We say they are persons of no capacity whatever—half-pay officers, briefless barristers, and promoted policemen; that they have duties to discharge which are not in England entrusted even to the Judges of the highest Courts; that their relations to the Executive Government are of a most remarkable character; and that they are executive as well as judicial officers. The Resident Magistrates are incompetent to discharge their duties, but the Chief Secretary speaks of them as if they were men inspired. The right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in getting for £400 a year men of extraordinary ability and judgment to discharge duties which are only intrusted to English Judges of the highest rank. How do those men act? I admit that it is difficult in this House to take case by case. The Resident Magistrates are as wise as serpents. They take care to have a fragment of evidence on one point, but to inflict punishment for offences which have not been proved. It is observed that they are not anxious to give the right of appeal; they will not state a case; they show the worst feature of a Judge in desiring that his decision shall escape review. They administer ferocious punishments, as is shown in the case of Mr. Harrington. Does any hon. Member consider that six months' hard labour is a proper punishment for publishing proceedings of a suppressed branch of the National League? Even the right hon. Member for West Birmingham is unable to defend that proceeding, and I am sure that the hon. Member for Salford will not defend it. How is the sentence defended by the Chief Secretary? The right hon. Gentleman says it is true that Mr. Harrington was guilty of that offence, but that everybody knows perfectly well that he has been guilty of the other offence of delivering a speech, and the Chief Secretary's defence of the Resident Magistrates is, that though the punishment might be too great for the offence which was committed, yet there was another offence not proved to have been committed, and in that view the punishment was not excessive.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid the hon. and learned Gentleman did not do me the honour to listen to my speech. I never made any assertion so extravagant or absurd.

MR. REID: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his courtesy—for the epithets he makes use of. He attributes to me the making of absurd statements.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not attribute any extravagant or absurd statement to the hon. and learned Gentleman. I merely say that I did not say anything so extravagant or absurd.

MR. REID: Then I withdraw my remark. I must have misunderstood the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. I promise to read the speech in the *Times* again, in order to see whether or not I have made a mistake. The people of Ireland believe that the whole of this procedure is a farce; that a trial is a mockery; that conviction is practically certain; and it is because of the general discredit which attaches to the sentences and the judgments of the Resident Magistrates that they impugn the administration of justice in Ireland. Then there is the question of jury-packing. Say there are 72 men on the panel. The prisoner may challenge six and the Crown six. Then the officer proceeds to call juror after juror until 12 men can enter the box. By the exercise of a right founded on an old Statute never used in England, the Crown can order men to "stand by;" and by this means, not of selection, but of exhaustion, they can put 12 men into the jury box for the purpose of trying the prisoner. That is the system of jury-packing, and that system exists in Ireland at present; and I defy the Government to deny it. The system is in force in nearly all the agrarian and political cases, and the result is that if trial before

a Resident Magistrate is a farce, trial, before a jury is a still greater farce; it is a gross fraud on the administration of justice. If the Government deny this, then there is a short and sharp method of meeting it. I am prepared to apply for a Committee to investigate my statement, and, if it is found that I am wrong, to express my regret to the House. Is such a system not a scandal and a disgrace, and do hon. Members opposite think that it is a healthy feature in any Government? Does the hon. Member for Salford believe that Lancashire men would respect, or ought to respect, the law, or should be called upon to obey it, if it were administered in such a manner to them? But what is the object of all these things? It is the most mercenary oppression that has ever existed. There has been in the history of Ireland oppression for divers purposes. We know what happened in the rebellion of 1798 and in other rebellions; but I am not aware that there has been any oppression in Ireland so utterly degraded as this oppression, because it is for the purpose of enabling landlords to get by their own combinations money out of the pockets of their tenants which in equity they ought not to have, and to use the Criminal Law in order to deprive the tenants of the only means they have of resisting those combinations. In 1885 the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) came forward with a programme which has been condemned by many as too extreme. No one followed the right hon. Gentleman more heartily than I did at that time. Indeed, I lost my seat in consequence, and no one looked forward more eagerly than I to see the right hon. Gentleman lead the rival Party. But what shall I say now? The right hon. Gentleman has driven away thousands upon thousands of men who were earnest and sincere in following the flag which he unfurled at that time. The right hon. Gentleman has allied himself with the Party and policy of Coercion, which he has helped to carry out with relentless severity. No man in the history of the last three or four years comes worse out of this business than the right hon. Gentleman. But there are other Members of the Liberal Unionist Party to consider. The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), in answer to a speech made by the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham (Mr. J. E. Ellis), spoke of the imperfections of the agents of the Government in Ireland. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean the Resident Magistrates or the police? Which did he mean? It is not worthy of a man in his position, if he believes there are defects in the Government of Ireland, not to come forward and assist us. It is not worthy of a man of the great position of the right hon. Gentleman in this House, when he believes there are imperfections in the agents of the Government, not to come forward and assist in endeavouring to find out where they have done wrong. If the Liberal Unionists are to maintain the Union, or to do anything else that is good, it is not by allowing themselves to become the servants out of livery of Her Majesty's Government that they will succeed. Coming to the second part of the Amendment, I am resolutely opposed to pledging British credit for the benefit of the Irish landlords, who have been allowed for a long time to plunder the Irish people, and whom I desire to prevent from plundering the English and Scotch people. The Irish landlords have made their bed and they must lie on it. If I had my will, I should wish to see an Irish Parliament dealing with the Land Question themselves; but I would not object to a settlement of the Irish Land Question being made by this House, if desired, provided British credit is not pledged for the purpose. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham demanded the plan of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian for establishing Home Rule. That plan has been given substantially already; its outline and principles are thoroughly well-known. But before the time comes for a Dissolution it is essential that further particulars should be given on some points; but unless a Dissolution is nearer at hand than it is admitted to be by hon. gentlemen opposite, I, for one, will not press the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian or his Colleagues to come forward with a plan against their will, because I do not wish to withdraw any part of the attention now being paid to the gross misgovernment of Ireland. If, however, Her Majesty's Ministers are prepared to grant a Dissolution, I will do my best

to urge on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian the propriety of bringing forward a detailed plan. Will the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham concede the propriety of consulting the hon. Member for Cork and his Friends in regard to the framing of any such measure? If he will, there is no difference in the position which the right hon. Gentleman takes up and ours. I hope the Home Secretary, who will probably speak soon, will tell us what the Government think of the policy propounded by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Is there any sincerity in that move? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham made a speech that was intended, of course, to catch votes if he could get them, and to divert the attention of the country from the present system of government in Ireland; and, I ask, are the Government prepared to make any approach to the views of that right hon. Gentleman, or are they to go on in the course of Coercion? Surely they could not go on spending the resources of the Empire in order to allow injustice to be done by the Clanricardes, the Olpherts, and the Vandeleurs in Ireland. That is the meaning of the policy now pursued. I believe that hon. Gentlemen opposite themselves feel that that policy could not be continued indefinitely. They are working the Constitution at high pressure, and there is danger in protracting this heated controversy. I submit it is not a healthy thing that a man like Mr. O'Brien, who was condemned by the law, should go to large meetings in England and Scotland and be received with acclamation and delight. But the law has been brought into popular contempt in Ireland, and the contamination may extend to England. We cannot be sure that we shall always be at peace; and if we continue this policy of exasperation we cannot tell how long we shall have the Members from Ireland, who I believe are now willing to take a moderate and statesmanlike view of this question, in their present frame of mind. Confident as the Liberal Party are of their triumph at the next General Election, it would be more satisfactory to them and the country if this great controversy could be closed by a national settlement. The time is opportune, and the work is pressing. Is there not virtue and wisdom enough in this great Assembly to effect such a settlement?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): The hon. Member for East Mayo said the other night that boycotted farms in Ireland were not being taken. I wish to challenge that assertion. I have been, during the last six weeks, on ten Plan of Campaign estates. Only a fortnight ago I walked over 13 boycotted holdings on one estate which had been taken by independent men from other counties. I counted the head of cattle on each farm; I saw the leases; I investigated the previous tenancies of the men; and I say that, although the hon. Member for Mayo knows a great deal, he does not know everything, and the House had better take with a pinch of salt everything that comes from that quarter as well as from the *Freeman's Journal*.

An hon. MEMBER: What was the estate?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It was the Coolgreany Estate. The farms have been taken by responsible tenants.

An hon. MEMBER: By emergency men?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: No; an emergency man has not 50 head of cattle. I also found on that estate 12 men who had retained possession of their farms, and who absolutely refused to join the Plan of Campaign. They had a right to do this. Because they dared to be honest men, because they claimed the right to make their own bargains with their landlord, these men found the greatest difficulty in selling their cattle at fairs, in getting provisions, and in maintaining the ordinary decencies of life. When we see how you treat these men, we know how you would treat us. Let those who are going to govern Ireland learn, first of all, to govern their own passions. Talk of tyranny and terrorism!—on one Campaign estate I had put into my hand three stamped legal documents, signed by the tenant, authorizing the landlord to distrain, the rent being paid all the while, and the documents were to protect the landlord from any subsequent action. [A VOICE: Where was this?] On the Lewis estate. I state nothing that I have not investigated to the bottom. In one case a man had actually asked to be evicted after he had paid his rent, and

he asked that a good force of "peelers" should be sent, and that he should be allowed to defend himself against them. [*Laughter.*] Laughter is no answer to facts; he laughs best who laughs last. On that and on other estates he visited there was a system of terrorism which Home Rule Members support, because they condemned the only machinery for dealing with it. Mr. O'Brien in the speech for which he was condemned said that the presence of a land-grabber was equal to an epidemic of yellow fever, and asked the people not to rest until they had stamped out the plague. How have peasants acted on such advice in the past? In Kerry, the other day, I stood on the threshold of a man who wanted to emigrate, who consulted the agent about the sale of his tenant-right, failed to come to terms with his next neighbour, and finally sold to a man named Cornelius Murphy, who was denounced as a land-grabber, and within a few months was shot dead in his own house. This (addressing the Home Rulers) is what you are supporting. You support it because you denounce the only machinery that can cope with it. Take the case of Forhan, who took a boycotted farm and who was on his way from Tralee market with labourers when he was shot dead on the high road, and peasants who were near would not render assistance. A dozen cases could be given to show what peasants understand by the stamping-out process; and the hon. Member (Mr. O'Brien) who, knowing this, recommended it, was guilty of a criminal act, and deserved to be treated as a criminal. [Mr. MORLEY: Why did they wait four months?] That is the business of the Executive Government. [A VOICE: "What were the dates of the murders?"] The first, the 28th of January, 1888; the second, the 20th of February, 1887, and that of Fitzmaurice in 1888, two days after the delivery of a speech denouncing land-grabbers by Mr. Davitt, within 20 miles of the spot. There is no use in comparing these things with Primrose League actions. Primrose Leaguers never used such language about dissenting shopkeepers; if they did, they could be prosecuted under the ordinary law. Lord Spencer was brought to book the other day, when he was challenged to give a single instance, and could not. As foul charges as were now brought against the Government were once brought against Lord Spencer and the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division. They were charged with hanging an innocent man in Miles Joyce. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir George Trevelyan) was virtuous. He could forget and forgive; smitten on one cheek he turned the other; and hated then, he was despised now. If the charges were wrong in 1882-3, what proof was there that they are right now? If they were not to be believed then, why should they be credited now? This proposed Vote of Censure was largely founded on the reports of the *Freeman's Journal*, which, to my own knowledge, has reduced lying to a fine art, and which has more actions hanging over it for lying than all the newspapers in the United Kingdom. I am sorry the case of Father M'Fadden has been referred to at all, because it is before the Courts; but if Father M'Fadden, had acted like a good citizen—

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I rise to order. I ask whether the hon. Member is justified in pronouncing an opinion on the conduct of Father M'Fadden, who is at present under trial, and whether former allusions had not reference solely to the manner in which the Government have treated Father M'Fadden.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not in my province to decide; the matter is one which rests entirely in the discretion of the hon. Member.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Member for East Mayo has charged the Government with murder. If Father M'Fadden had acted the part of a good citizen, if he had obeyed the summons of the Court, no warrant would have been necessary, and Inspector Martin might have been alive to-day. Therefore Father M'Fadden, whatever he was legally, was morally responsible for the murder. I was present at the Unionist banquet at Dublin, and I was not aware of any objection to the publication of the names of the company. It is said that there were roars of laughter at the story of Mr. O'Brien's sufferings. I affirm there was nothing of the kind. I am not quite sure whether roars of laughter were not inserted by the *Freeman's Journal*.

MR. DILLON: The same report appeared in the *Times*, the *Dublin Daily*

Express, and all other papers, and it was a report that was furnished officially, no newspaper reporters being present.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The laughter was provoked by the Chief Secretary's account of the manner in which the Lord Mayor of Dublin made a "holy show" of himself by sending his two ambassadors to the Castle at 2 a.m., and crediting the story of the Chief Secretary's coming down in his shirt with a star on his breast.

MR. SEXTON: My telegram was despatched at 11 o'clock and his letter at 1 o'clock, and the roars of laughter occurred long before that.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I and my friends claim to laugh even at the Lord Mayor of Dublin. We claim the right to laugh at what we think fit, even though it concerns Mr. O'Brien, and though attempts may be made to intimidate us, as attempts have been made to intimidate and ruin shopkeepers who refused to put up their shutters out of sympathy for Mr. O'Brien. This is an instance of the liberty that hon. Members believe in. Until they show a little more toleration towards those who differ from them, they ought not to claim self-government. As to the treatment of Mr. O'Brien, I would be quite willing to vote for any Bill providing that imprisonment for all political offences, as these are termed—those of the dupes who commit the crimes as well as those who instigate them—should be without hard labour, or as first-class misdemeanants. But if the law is to be altered, let it be altered on some general principle. It is a mistake to suppose that there are only two classes of offences—the purely political and those of the thief and the gaol bird. There is, for instance, the man who violates the secrecy of the ballot; he is liable to six months' hard labour, and you make him consort with criminals, and you dress him as one. If the law is to be altered, let it be done thoroughly, and not merely for Members of Parliament. The hon. Member for East Mayo stated the other night that he hated crime and did his best to put it down. I ask him this question: Who paid for the defence of he murderers of Huddy?

MR. T. M. HEALY: Ask Webster.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: You talk of your hatred of crime, yet when one of the foulest murders ever perpetrated in Ireland comes to be tried by jury whose verdict you never yet questioned, you pay for the defence of the murderers.

MR. JOHN DILLON: We pay for the defence of the murderers? I say that is a foul lie.

*MR. SPEAKER: No doubt the language of the hon. Member, and especially the way in which it was addressed was very irritating; but I cannot allow the word "lie" to pass in this House, and I hope hon. Gentlemen will refrain from these personalties, which are derogatory to the dignity of the House.

MR. DILLON: I unhesitatingly withdraw, Mr. Speaker; but I do say the provocation was intense.

*MR. RUSSELL: I will put it in this way—— (Cries of "Withdraw") If hon. Members will listen to me, I will explain I cannot withdraw that which I know to be true.

Mr. DILLON: Is that fair play, Mr. Speaker? I put it to you, Sir, when he made this charge he pointed to me.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: No I did not.

Mr. DILLON: He said the hon. Member for East Mayo said he hated crime, and then he pointed at me and said, "Yet you pay for the defence of these murderers."

*MR. SPEAKER: That is the reason that I said I considered the remarks of the hon. Member to be of an irritating character. I think the hon. Member had better pass away from this matter.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I never intended to refer to the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo personally as having had anything to do with the defence of these men. I say that most unhesitatingly.

MR. O'HANLON, who was sitting in one of the side Galleries: Who, then, did you refer to?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order!

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I now come to the question of crime on the Kenmare Estate. At the end of October last year, crime had been reduced almost to a vanishing point. In September in fact there was none at all. But then the Plan of Campaign was inaugurated on the Kenmare Estate and simultaneously crime burst out again and moonlighting and intimidation became rife. You may denounce crime but unquestionably it follows wherever the Plan of Campaign is started.

An HON. MEMBER: Yes, Pigott for instance.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Don't mention Pigott to me. I have no more to do with him than you have.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I rise to say that the hon. Member who interrupted from the gallery has come down and seated himself behind the hon. Member speaking, and is interrupting him.

[At this point there was considerable disturbance behind the hon. Member for South Tyrone.]

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.): I want this gentleman to apologize. I will just give him a minute to think, and if he does not apologize I will—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. H. J. WILSON (York W.R., Holmfirth): I distinctly saw the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South East Durham personally assault the Member for East Cavan.

*MR. SPEAKER: Will the hon. Baronet explain?

SIR H. HAVELOCK-ALLAN: With the greatest pleasure. I recognized by chance the hon. Member who is now sitting next me as the hon. Member who made that irregular interruption in the Gallery just now. I had not the slightest intention of bringing myself into personal collision with the hon. Gentleman; that is a thing I should most studiously avoid; but I happened by accident when passing him to come into contact with him, and I regret having done so.

MR. O'HANLON: The hon. and gallant Gentleman—as I suppose I am bound to call him—comes over and throws himself on me, and then he offers this as an apology. It is not one, and if he does not apologize, I will not give him much time.

*MR. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. and gallant Gentleman will apologize to the hon. Member. I must say I did observe what apparently was the hon. and gallant Gentleman's throwing himself on the hon. Member. It is most improper, and the hon. and gallant Gentleman must apologize.

SIR H. HAVELOCK-ALLAN: If I have in the slightest degree——

*MR. SPEAKER: I did observe what passed. Nothing could be more improper. The best course for the hon. and gallant Gentleman to take is to apologize.

SIR H. HAVELOCK-ALLAN: For a long course of years, Sir, it has been my pride to observe your ruling with the utmost respect. I can assure you that it is a matter of extreme regret to me, and nothing was further from my intention than to hurt the feelings of the hon. Gentleman. I should be loth indeed to come into contact with him.

MR. O'HANLON: Mr. Speaker, I beg your pardon again, Sir. He says I had better get out of this.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Really, I hope I may appeal to hon. Members on both sides of the House, and I do appeal to them with confidence, to set their faces against these interruptions. They are most unseemly, and give pain to everybody who has at heart the dignity of the House. I call upon the hon. Member to continue his speech.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The real fact is that the area of disturbance in Ireland is exceedingly limited. Everywhere I went I perceived evidences of the improved state of things. Boycotting was diminishing, and all the scenes at the arrest and trial of certain persons were part of a carefully prepared drama. The grievances of Ireland must, indeed, be few when one of the most prominent put forward was that Mr. O'Brien was made to travel second instead of first class. I heard the speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and I believed everything that the right hon. Gentleman says about the land question. [*A laugh.*] It is very easy to laugh, no doubt, and by way of qualifying for an Irish Parliament to turn that House into a Cogers'-hall. The Land Question was at the root of this whole Irish business, and if we once removed it from the troubled arena of Irish politics, we shall remove the one question which prevents every question from being fairly approached and settled. I shall vote against the Amendment, because no attempt has been made to prove the first part of it, and because the second part had not been touched.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The House will be very glad to see that the health of the hon. Gentleman has been so completely restored by his recent excursion to Ireland, at the expense of the *Times*.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: These excursions were not undertaken at the expense of the *Times*?

MR. T. M. HEALY: At the expense of the Loyal and Patriotic Union.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Nor at the expense of the Loyal and Patriotic Union?

MR. T. M. HEALY: I must beg that the hon. Gentleman will not turn this House into a Coger's-hall. We are all glad that the hon. Member's health has been so much restored as to enable him to deliver himself with so much energy. But the hon. Gentleman labours under great disabilities, for all the cases which he has trotted out to harrow the feelings of the House are the cases which have already been dealt with at the *Times* Commission; and as the hon. Member trotted them out one by one, I noticed a sickly smile steal over the face of the Attorney General. I am surprised that the hon. Member could not even wait for the Report of the Judges; but as the Report of the Judges must in this case be that it was a case, and the case of fraud be of a certain character, I can understand the natural anxiety of the hon. Member to be a little in advance of the Report. I will now ask the House to judge of the character of the statements made by the hon. Gentleman. It was stated by him that evicted farms on the Coolgreany estates had been taken, that the tenants had cattle, and that he had seen their leases. But the men who were supposed to be tenants were notorious emergency men who killed Kinsella, and who had never received a day's punishment for the murder. These were the men who were installed on the estate, and assisted by the Loyal and Patriotic Union. This is the contemptible kind of stuff which the House is asked to swallow. I am surprised the hon. Gentleman manages to work himself up into such a passion; why, he is not even an Irishman. The hon. Gentleman says that he found the Plan of Campaign everywhere to be a deadly and blighting curse. But why did he write to the *Times* to suggest that the head rack-renter, Lord Clanricarde, should be compulsorily expropriated? That was the first, as it was the chief, estate on which the Plan of Campaign was started, yet, regardless of that fact, the hon. Member went down to Portumna and Loughrea and passed over the estate with the police agent, and his suggestion is that, because the Marchioness of Clanricarde was not suitably buried, Lord Clanricarde's estate should be expropriated. The hon. Gentleman also visited the Delmege estate. What did he say to the tenants there? Did he not say to the tenants on that estate that they need not be a bit afraid, and that they were terribly rack-rented?' [MR. T. W. RUSSELL indicated that that was so.] And, according to the information which he had from two of the tenants, the hon. Member told them that they need not fear eviction, as he would take care that neither soldiers nor police were granted for such a purpose. I am astonished that the hon. Gentleman, being a Scotchman, should get up steam so rapidly, and work himself into a passion on behalf of a country with which he has nothing to do, except that he owns an hotel in it. He has stated that the *Freeman's Journal*, which he says is the most libellous paper in existence, interpolated the roars of laughter in its report of the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland which was delivered at the banquet in Dublin; and he remarked that that paper had had more actions against it than any other paper in the kingdom. I thought that the *Times* enjoyed that forensic distinction. But why are libel actions brought against the *Freeman's Journal*? Every one of them is brought by a Resident Magistrate, and the venue is always laid in Belfast, although the hon. Gentleman has talked about the purity of the jurors of the City of Dublin; and when the *Freeman's Journal* applied to have the venue changed, they went out of the frying-pan into Lord Ashbourne, and that distinguished Member of the Cabinet, who sat in the Court of Appeal, promptly disallowed the appeal. These libel actions are brought for reports and public meetings printed in that Journal, and you lay the venue in Belfast in order to get damages. Now, as to the charge that the *Freeman's Journal* has interpolated "laughter" in the report of the speech of the Chief Secretary at the banquet in Dublin, I have got a copy of the pamphlet issued, and I have also a copy of the *Times* which contained a report of the speech. It is said that the Government have on their side all the wealth, education, culture, and

courage of Ireland, and that their supporters are only anxious to lead thousands of stalwart men against the Nationalists. But what is the case? These men of wealth, and education, and culture, and courage dared not have it known that they were at tha banquet to the Chief Secretary. No; you won't meet us in the open. The *Times* report is identical with that in every newspaper. I ask this House, which is a fair assembly, to judge between my statement and that of the hon. Gentleman who last spoke. The Chief Secretary said—

"I desire not to descend into the squalid details of the controversy which are forced on the Irish Secretary only too often by the tactics of those with whom he has to deal [laughter and cheers]. The last thing I desire to do is to add any to the very many words I have had to say with regard to Mr. William O'Brien [laughter]."

"Laughter" you see at the mere mention of the name of Mr. O'Brien—it was so funny. Why, the guests bubbled up with laughter like champagne bubbles rise in a bottle just opened. Then the right hon. Gentleman said—

"The last thing I desired to do was to add another word to the many words I have had to say with regard to Mr. O'Brien [laughter] and Mr. O'Brien's prison treatment."

and then there was renewed laughter. "I take little interest in these histrionic performances," and then there was more laughter; they would not give him a chance to go on. "I take even less interest in them on the second representation [laughter]." Then he said—

"I ought, perhaps, to say a word, and I assure you it shall be a great word, on the communication I had the honour of receiving at about a quarter to one last night—[prolonged laughter]—a telegram from the Lord Mayor of Dublin—[renewed laughter]—which I allude to now, because I take it it represents the national case with regard to Mr. O'Brien's treatment in prison, and in this document, the original of which I have got in my hand, I read—I won't read it all—'Illegal and brutal violence [laughter]—that is not it [laughter]—unexampled indignation [laughter]—system of attacking and breaking down your political adversary by torture. [Laughter.] No, that is not it; here it is, Mr. O'Brien has now been naked in his cell for thirty-six hours. [Roars of laughter.]'"

What are you to think of a man who will make these utterly reckless and unsifted statements? The Chief Secretary has also said that my Friend O'Brien objected to travel second class. The only objection Mr. O'Brien took was this—

"I will insist upon being treated in Ireland as I have been treated in England. I will not allow you to act the hypocrite in England by taking me first class, and then, when you get me to Ireland, trying to huddle me in a second or third-class carriage. I will insist upon equal treatment in the two countries."

Now, with regard to the statement that Mr. O'Brien objected to the prison clothes. I wonder Dr. O'Farrell's report, which was published this morning, did not contain Mr. O'Brien's statement to me about prison clothes! Will it surprise the House that Mr. O'Brien does not object in the least to prison clothes? I will read Mr. O'Brien's statement on the point, and thus show that the stories flying about amount to an abominable hypocrisy got up to pretend that this man desires better treatment because he is a Member of Parliament. Mr. O'Brien says:—

"He (Dr. O'Farrell) asked had I any complaint of the way in which the other officials had carried out their orders? I told him that it was not the officials I complained of, but their orders. I said, 'Of course, they used very considerable force and violence, and caused me very cruel suffering, but I admit that they did not use more force than was necessary, because I resisted with all my strength, and it was undoubtedly necessary for them to use very considerable force if they were to succeed in overpowering me. They did overpower me; but I do not charge that they did so with any wilful brutality or ill-temper.' Dr. O'Farrell then asked me whether I objected to his examining me, and I said, 'Not in the least; neither to you nor to anyone else.' At the same time, I told him distinctly that I was fighting this matter, not as a sick man, but as a political prisoner. I said, 'I will contend for nothing that the poorest or the commonest man convicted under the Summary Jurisdiction Clause of the Coercion Act is not equally entitled to. With me it is not in the least a question of food or even of treatment, but of classification. I told the officials before in Tullamore—and I am quite as willing now, as then, to carry out the proposition—that this whole struggle might be obviated by the simple expedient of making all prisoners convicted under the Summary Jurisdiction Clause of this Act a separate 'class.' Whatever their treatment might be, if this were done, I, for one, would not have the slightest objection to wear whatever prison uniform would be set apart for that 'class,' or to perform any menial offices whatever that would be imposed on my comrades. Those who think us criminals could think so still, and would have the satisfaction of punishing us as much as any ordinary criminals could be punished, while we would have it established that it was under this Act, and under this Act alone, that we were criminals; but the object of our present treat-

ment clearly is to attempt to degrade and confound us with criminals."

[An hon. MEMBER: What is the paper you are quoting from?] This statement was made to me by Mr. O'Brien on the day Mr. O'Brien was convicted in Tralee. The statement was made 12 months ago to the prison officials of Tullamore that he was fighting not for food or clothes, but that he should be put into a separate class, and should not be compelled to associate with the burglar, the thief, and the forger. You can print the broad arrow two feet long on his back if you like; Mr. O'Brien will not mind. Now, the Chief Secretary has often been convicted, especially in relation to matters arising under this Act, of mis-statement, misrepresentation, and I will say falsification of fact, as clearly as any man has ever been found guilty by a jury. I would convict the right hon. Gentleman now, and here, of as deliberate an attempt to pervert the truth in relation to this matter——[*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Order!"] I do not wish to put my words offensively, but I will convict him of as great a mis-statement as any man was ever guilty of. The Chief Secretary stated in his letter to Mr. Armitage that any Government which allowed Mr. O'Brien's speech to go unpunished might make itself accessory to assasination. Why, then, did the Government allow four months to elapse before prosecuting the speech? Feeling the pressure of that point, the right hon. Gentleman put up the Solicitor General for Ireland yesterday to make a statement—Pigotted him, in fact, and he Pigotted the House. The Solicitor General for Ireland said the reason of that was because the First Lord of the Treasury gave a promise that until the Irish Estimates were disposed of there should be no pursuance of any prosecution of Irish Members. That was the excuse. Will the House believe that this speech was made on the 30th of September? Two months afterwards, on the 23rd of November, the First Lord's promise was made. I call that Pigottry.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman has deliberately accused me of wilful falsehood, because my hon. and learned Friend near me, in discussing this incident, said one of the reasons was that the First Lord of the Treasury had not given the pledge in question till the 23rd of November, and the speech was delivered on the 30th of September. Of course, I should be out of order in dealing with the whole of this question, which I am perfectly prepared to deal with—which I only admitted to deal with—through inadvertence, an inadvertence which the House will excuse when they recollect that I spoke for two hours. What I ask is whether it is in order to accuse me of deliberate falsehood because my hon. and learned Friend near me did not give as full and effective an explanation of the facts as seemed consistent to the hon. and learned Gentleman?

*MR. SPEAKER: Any accusation of deliberate falsehood is quite un-Parliamentary.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Quite so, Mr. Speaker; certainly. I did not use the words deliberate falsehood.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member did make use of an expression which I trust will not become common in this House. It implied the statement I have made.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In dealing with a matter like this, it is very difficult, on the spur of the moment, to capture the most suitable expression to characterize the Minister's statement. Therefore, I will content myself by the baldest recital of the circumstances. The Chief Secretary writes to Mr. Armitage that the speech delivered on the 30th of September, if unprosecuted, would involve the Government in being accessory to assassination. The point taken thereon is—"Why did you not prosecute for four months?" Reply—"Because the First Lord of the Treasury promised there should be no prosecutions pending the Estimates." Rebuttal—"Turn to the First Lord of the Treasury's statement, and you will find the date of the promise was 23rd November, two months afterwards, and Parliament was not sitting at the time the speech was made."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN): I ought to call to the recollection of the House exactly what I did state. I only accounted for the difference of time between the date of the First Lord's pledge and the conclusion of the Session, and I said that if that period of time were deducted, that made the delay very much less than what was mentioned.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I have sent out for a record, the accuracy of which will hardly be disputed by the Colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, the *Times*. In the meantime, assuming the validity of the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman—who had a very difficult position in having to make up for the blunders of the Chief Secretary for Ireland—the point I have put forward remains. While the First Lord of the Treasury was, I hope, virtuously disporting himself at Cannes or Monaco, this Speech remained unprosecuted by Her Majesty's Government. I have now been furnished with the words of the hon. and learned Gentleman as reported in the *Times*, and they are as follows:—

"The right hon. Member for Newcastle asked how it was that Mr. O'Brien was not prosecuted until January for the speech he had made in September. Well, the simple answer was that a pledge had been given by the Leader of the House, that Members of Parliament should not be proceeded against until the Estimates were finally disposed of, which did not happen till Christmas Eve, and then the intervention of Christmas carried the proceedings over till January."

What is more, that pledge only applied to Members against whom warrants or summonses were then issued, and my hon. Friend the Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. Sexton) simply asked, after the Jeremiah Sullivan incident, that there should be no further prosecutions until the Irish Estimates were disposed of. The Government had the entire month of October in which to proceed against the Irish Members. Parliament did not meet until about the middle of November, and during all that time this virtuous Unionist Government was making itself "accessory to assassination." That is not all, for—will the House believe it?—Mr .O'Brien was not prosecuted for the speech in question until two other summonses for different matters in Kerry had been determined upon. I will supply the House with another extraordinary fact — namely, that there was no thought of prosecuting Mr. O'Brien so long as the late Governor of Clonmel—a respectable old Catholic gentleman, who was believed to be more or less in sympathy with the Nationalists —remained alive. He was unhappily drowned about the beginning of the present year, and until the Government brought down from Downpatrick an instrument on whom they could rely for inflicting this torture upon Mr. O'Brien, they never dreamt of commencing proceedings against Mr. O'Brien. I ask the Chief Secretary whether that statement is true?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman asks me, I will reply on the spot. It is wholly untrue—it is wholly incorrect. The speech was made on the 30th of September. In due course it came to me early in October, and I stated it was my opinion that the language ought to be prosecuted. The Attorney General thought a prosecution would lie, but desired evidence of a recrudescence of the conspiracy. As soon as he heard of it, he said that such language ought not to go unpunished. I never knew until a week ago that the Governor of Clonmel Gaol had been replaced.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Observe the present statement the right hon. Gentleman makes. I will not imitate the right hon. Gentleman by saying that the statement is wholly untrue. [MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I apologize.] The statement now is that in the month of October the opinion of the Chief Secretary that the speech ought to be prosecuted went to the Attorney General for Ireland. The Attorney General, who is not a sleepy man, allowed the matter to lie for four months. Now, what is the evidence of a recrudescence of the conspiracy? The principal witness was one W. T. Hanly, one of the *Times'* witnesses, who had in my presence sworn that he had not been subpœnaed by the *Times*, but whom, two days afterwards, the Attorney General had to interrupt Mr. Harrington's evidence to call, because he had been subpœnaed for a long time, and was waiting to give his evidence. William P. Hanly, of Thurles, land agent, deposed, in the presence of Mr. O'Brien—

"I was acting in 1887 and 1888 as agent for Mr. Cormack, over the lands of Modeshill, County Tipperary. I am the person referred to in Mr. O'Brien's speech given in evidence today. I see the Civil Bill Decree produced. It is Mr. Wall's signature to it, and the handwriting of Mr. Boyd, Clerk of the Peace. The Sub-Sheriff wrote the name of Andrew Carden in my presence. Captain Andrew Carden was High Sheriff, and Mr. Gerald Fitzgerald Sub-Sheriff, that year. That is Mr. Fitzgerald's hand-writing to that decree. I received possession under the Sheriff's warrant on that

decree. I have still the lands mentioned in that decree in my hands. I got possession under the four other ejectment decrees handed in. All those are for the lands of Modeshill, and are signed by the County Court Judge and Clerk of the Peace, and the warrants are signed by the Sheriff of the County Tipperary. The decrees are at the suit of Michael D. Cormack *v.* Michael Power, Michael D. Cormack *v.* Patrick Funcheon, Michael D. Cormack *v.* Martin Drennan, Michael D. Cormack *v.* Patrick Funcheon and Bridget Keeffe."

That was the entire evidence given on behalf of the Crown. That is the evidence of the recrudescence of the conspiracy. I beg the House to listen to this man's cross-examination to see how much Mr. O'Brien's speech, made on the 30th September, had to do with the prosecution:—

"Cross-examined by Mr. Healy—When were the lands evicted? In May, 1888. Did you make any effort to tenant the lands? I have made no effort to get them tenanted since. It was in 1884 there was a feeling against land-grabbing, and it increase in 1889. The Land League was just dying out until the recent agitation about two or three months ago.

"Re-examined by Mr. Ryan—I attribute the revival of the Land League to the Thurles Convention. Boycotting was revived. The Convention was on the 24th October. No one would take the evicted farm until the tenant settles. A great number of them I could not get tenants for, and that continues up to the present in Tipperary.

"To the Court—Modeshill is about 14 miles from Carrick-on-Suir. I don't know where Ballyneale is."

Such is the evidence upon which you have sentenced Mr. O'Brien to four months' imprisonment, and to be assaulted in the abominable way he has been assaulted. It is said Mr. William O'Brien was put in the charge of officials Were Protestant officials put in place of Catholic officials? Were Catholic warders removed from the prison where Mr O'Brien was to be taken, and were Protestant warders put in their place? Above all, I have to ask with regard to this man, whom your own doctors, Dr. Barr and Dr. Ridley, said was a delicate man, and as to whose state of health the Chief Secretary says he has lots of evidence, whether he has been put in charge of a doctor who has been recently liberated from a lunatic asylum? Is Dr. Hewetson a liberated lunatic or not? There is no answer from the Treasury Bench. This accounts for your waiting four months. So long as the old Governor of the gaol lived—a quiet, respectable, decent man—no attempt was made against Mr. O'Brien in Clonmel gaol, but then you bring a warder from Downpatrick and make a prison doctor of a liberated lunatic, who boasted he would soon put Mr. O'Brien into prison clothes. Would it not be desirable that, for your own self-protection, you should take some measures of precaution to prevent these terrible accusations being made against you? The hon. Member for South Tyrone says we made desperate charges against Irish officials in Dublin. Yes; and, what is still more melancholy, we proved every one of them. Where are the men we attacked in '83? Where is Cornwall, the Secretary of the General Post Office? A hunted felon! Where is Detective Director French? A hunted felon! Where are all the rest of the gang, some of whom have been playfellows of Lords Lieutenants in the past? Perhaps if Mr. Richard Pigott could be produced we might get some further evidence as to his trade in obscene literature. [An hon. MEMBER: Photographs.] We proved all the charges we made in 1883. Not a single official we attacked in connection with these desperate crimes but has been hunted out of the country like unclean things as they were. The hon. Member for South Tyrone gets up and, tearing a passion to tatters, declares we have been attacking white-robed angels, when you know you did not dare to allow Cornwall or any one of them their pensions. There are men whom we have met before the Commission against whom we have said no word in relation to this very matter; but if we should, you will see whether two years hence a Government will get up and say we made the accusations with absolutely no foundation. I tell the Government this thing is not through yet, and when the hon. Member for South Tyrone talks to us about making false accusations, I think the less said on the subject of false accusations by a paid pamphleteer of the *Times* the better so long as an unsavoury odour lingers around the *employés* of that respectable journal. Now, I take up another matter to test the accuracy of the Chief Secretary's statements in his letter to Mr. Armitage, I assert it as a positive fact that he is unable to prove a single statement he made therein. He says that it is not true that five warders attacked Mr. O'Brien, and in

the struggle tore his clothes off. Perhaps his contention is that there were only four warders?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; that was not my point at all. I made the contradiction in all candour, and meant that the statement as a whole was entirely untrue.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Mr. O'Brien's statement is that the chief warder directed him to strip and put on the prison clothes, and on his refusal three other warders, with the chief warder, rushed upon him, the Governor standing by. They threw him down and dragged his clothes away. One of the warders placed his knee on the prisoner's chest, and, perhaps, not intentionally, caused him considerable suffering. He heard someone say, "Don't hurt him," and the knee was removed. Now, whether will the House believe Mr. O'Brien or the Chief Secretary? If these denials are persisted in will a sworn inquiry into the subject be granted? Or will you allow a sworn inquiry to wait, as it did in the case of Mr. Mandeville, until it takes the form of a coroner's inquest? This is the only sworn inquiry open to these unfortunate prisoners in Ireland. You meet their testimony with denials in this House, the victims die and their friends repeat their testimony; the coroner's jury find it true, and then you get the coroner's decision quashed in the Queen's Bench. Now, I am not making the point that, if a man is to be stripped, force, if it is legal, should not be used to overcome resistance. I am dealing with the Chief Secretary's denial that force was used. Mr. O'Brien says he was flung on the floor; the Chief Secretary denies that. Mr. O'Brien struggled against the execution of the order to cut off his hair and beard; he remembered some dashes at him with scissors, and became unconscious. When he recovered, he found his mouth full of hair. No wonder the Liberal Unionists at the banquet laughed. I remember other Philistines who laughed over a similar triumph at another famous banquet. The Chief Secretary goes on to deny that the prisoner was left naked in his cell for 36 hours—says it is all a dream of Mr. O'Brien's imagination. Meanwhile, before dawn, shortly after seven, Mr. O'Brien was aroused, unless indeed they took furtive glances through the spy-hole. The prisoner drank but could not eat, walking about to keep himself warm and getting what warmth he could from the hot water pipe. At the usual hour a plank bed, mattress, and two blankets were brought, but no pillow. Mr. O'Brien says he could not sleep, cold as he was, and got what comfort he could from resting his head on the water pipe. Noble spectacle for Liberal Unionist laughter! Might I suggest to the Government that instead of some of the frescoes that commemorate the deeds of your forefathers and adorn the corridors communicating between this and the House of Lords—removing, for instance, from entablature, the "Last sleep of Argyle"—they should commission an artist to design, as a substitute, this Bed of O'Brien at Clonmel. This is the man whom twenty millions of the Queen's subjects love as if he were their brother, and who, if they had it in their power, would, rather than a hair of his head were touched, see every Tory Minister and Liberal Unionist at Jericho. All this is matter for jeers and sneers and laughter at a Liberal Unionist banquet! Why, from point of policy, to put it no higher, is it desirable that these things should go on? I tell the Government that if anything had happened to this man they would have had Ireland in a state in which not 50 Coercion Bills would have succeeded in restoring what you call a condition of law and order. It is to this fact we may attribute whatever little concessions were made, not to the brutal cynicism of official gentlemen who sneer and cheer and laugh at a Liberal Unionist banquet. Meanwhile, the Chief Secretary was enjoying himself, paid by the country he deceived at the hustings with promises of no coercion. He was careful to tell the Liberal Unionists he "slept the sleep of the just!" Mr. O'Brien describes the scene, and continues to narrate how he was dragged along, he not knowing the intention was to weigh him. The Secretary for War the other night said the weighing-machine was brought up to the door of the cell, Mr. O'Brien having to walk no distance at all. Now, I should like to see this weighing-machine. I should like to know how far it is a portable machine. Why, in regard to a man towards whom you have used every

indignity, and knocked him down, stripped him, put him in prison clothes, cut off his beard and hair, you should be so careful of his feelings as to bring the weighing-machine to the door of his cell, I cannot understand. Mr. O'Brien, with no intimation of the intention to weigh him, found himself being dragged across the main hall of the building; then, finding himself put on the machine, he still resisted, because, he said, after the manner in which he had been treated, he would yield to nothing but force. The attempt to weigh was abandoned, and he was taken back to his cell, where he removed his prison clothes, retaining nothing but his shirt. The door was closed, the warders making no attempt to force him into the clothes again. A prisoner can only compute time by meal-times and the sound of clocks he may hear, and Mr. O'Brien did this. Food was brought, but neither Governor nor Doctor came near the man who had suffered brutal violence, and was left hour after hour naked in his cell, his plank bed and covering taken away, his quilt dragged from him as too great a luxury, and the prisoner resumed his walk up and down his cell in his shirt. So he remained until the doctor was brought to his senses by what the Chief Secretary calls a system of intimidation. All I say is, God bless the means that brought the doctor to his senses. I tell you straight the only protection William O'Brien had from being done to death in his prison was that the doctor found out mighty quickly that if he took William O'Brien's life, his own period of doctorship in Clonmel gaol might not be a very pleasant one. It was not to pity, not to humanity, not respect for law and order, but what you describe as intimidation, that you yielded and gave this man clothes to cover himself. If intimidation works miracles like this can you wonder it should be practised? If you will not yield to humanity and good sense, then I say long live intimidation. For generations you were deaf to all appeals, then the people of Ireland combined, and to intimidation you yielded what you refused to logical argument. In the same way this prison doctor found there was a feeling swelling up outside that if O'Brien were killed the people of Clonmel and of Ireland would know the reason why. But the Chief Secretary did not state who was the person who committed the assault on the doctor's house. It is a curious incident that he is a Liberal Unionist. His name is Kingston, and his father is employed in the Sub-Sheriff's office. He was caught at once by the police standing opposite the house, and brought before my hon. Friend the Mayor of Clonmel who on the previous day was sentenced to four months' imprisonment and was then out on bail. My hon. Friend made the first use of his liberty in sentencing Kingston to the utmost penalty the law allowed, a fine of forty shillings or a month's imprisonment. The right hon. Gentleman did not tell this story, but I leave the House to judge why. This was the only incident of violence offered to the Doctor—or if there were others why did you not institute a prosecution. Kingston was sentenced by the Mayor, and I am not surprised, for Kingston said he threw the stone as the result of a Liberal Unionist plot. I have not the slightest doubt that Kingston's fine of 40s. will be paid by Mr. Houston of the Loyal and Patriotic League. Yes, I am informed that a member of the Conservative party in Clonmel came forward and paid the fine. The right hon. Gentleman finds all this extremely amusing. Well, I do not know that if I were drawing a salary of £4,400 a-year and coals, that I should find it so extremely amusing to be caught out in several gross perversions of the truth, but then people are differently constituted. The Chief Secretary having been categorically shown to have mis-stated facts in several instances, finds it subject for laughter only! Now I come to the final statement upon which the whole speech in Dublin was based, that Mr. O'Brien refused to allow himself to be medically examined. Was that true or false? The right hon. Gentleman has himself confessed it was absolutely false, and there is not a shred or shadow of foundation for it. The right hon. Gentleman, in his letter to the *Times*, says—

"To say that Mr. O'Brien threw every obstacle in the way of medical examination is excessive, he allowed his pulse to be felt, and the stethoscope to be used, but he declined to be weighed, and declined to answer questions as to the present or previous state of his health. From what happens was this, according to Mr

O'Brien's account. The doctor placed a stethoscope to his heart, felt his pulse, placed another instrument to his breast, and struck him lightly on the stomach. Mr. O'Brien told the doctor he was at perfect liberty to examine him, but he declined to answer questions because of the perversions of his answers on a previous occasion when the Chief Secretary stated the hon. Member had sheltered himself under plea of a weak heart. What are we to think of the statement of an official who says Mr. O'Brien threw every obstacle in the way of medical examination? There is not a shred or tittle of truth in the statement. When caught out in this statement, when gibbetted at the cross roads of public opinion, he comes with his letter to the *Times*, saying this statement was excessive. I do not think it was excessive, it was Balfouresque. 'It would be more correct to say,' said the Chief Secretary, 'that Mr. O'Brien threw very serious obstacles in the way of medical examination.' "

This is equally unfounded. He threw no obstacle in the way; he simply declined to answer any question as to his previous history, because the Chief Secretary, when he was imprisoned in Tullamore, made the most atrocious misuse of statements made, declaring that Mr. O'Brien sheltered himself behind the plea of a weak heart. This is the Gentleman who has charge of five millions of Her Majesty's subjects, who has the liberties of every man in Ireland at his disposal. This magnanimous Gentleman, who has the fate of Irish Members in his hands, gets up and makes a statement that is absolutely unfounded, and when it is shattered and riven, withdraws it with about as much grace as the Attorney General withdraws the forged letters from before the Royal Commission.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

MOTIONS.

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UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND).

On Motion of the Lord Advocate, Bill for the better administration and endowment of the Universities of Scotland, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland, and Sir Herbert Maxwell.

AGRICULTURAL TENANTS' IMPROVEMENTS.

On Motion of Mr. Seale-Hayne, Bill to compensate Agricultural Tenants for Improvements, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, and Mr. Halley Stewart.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (REPORTS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lockwood, Bill to amend the Law as to Reports of Proceedings in Courts of Law, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Hubbard.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 21.]

JURORS' DETENTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lockwood, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Detention of Juries on the trial of Felonies, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lockwood, Mr. Finlay, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Asquith, and Mr. Howard Vincent.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 22.]

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Chance, Bill to amend the Land Law (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chance, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Maurice Healy.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 23.]

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES' ACT. 1875.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into, and report upon, the operation of section 30 of "The Friendly Societies' Act, 1875," as amended by subsequent Acts, and into the organisation or general condition of Societies and Companies to which the said section applies, and to suggest what amendment of the Law (if any) is required to ensure the better management of such Societies and Companies, and the more complete protection of the interests of their members.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twenty-one Members:—The Committee was accordingly nominated of,—Mr. Thomas Fielden, Lord Francis Hervey, Mr. Samuel Hoare, Mr. Howorth, Mr. Wootton Isaacson, Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Norton, Mr. Egerton Hubbard, Mr. A. H. Brown, Mr. James Caldwell, Mr. Bradlaugh, Dr. Clark, Mr. Fenwick, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. W. B. Rowlands, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. P. J. Foley, and Mr. Conway.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas*).

House adjourned at Five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 7.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 9.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 1*st March*, 1889.

SAT FIRST IN PARLIAMENT.

The Marquess of Winchester, after the death of his father.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.

A Bill to amend the law as to the Endowment of the Archdeaconry of Cornwall. Presented by the Lord President (for the Lord Steward); read 1ª. (No. 12.)

SWEATING SYSTEM.

ADDITIONS TO SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Duke of Norfolk and Lord Basing were added to this Select Committee.

THE SALE AND USE OF REVOLVERS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

*THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they propose to take measures to restrain the indiscriminate sale of revolvers, and the custom of carrying these deadly weapons, which now appears to prevail, said:—My Lords, the Question of which I have given notice divides itself into two heads, first with regard to the sale of revolvers, and secondly to the constant and growing custom of carrying these deadly weapons. As regards the first head, I believe I am perfectly correct in saying that there are no regulations whatever in existence in regard to the sale of revolvers. They may be and are sold to anybody or everybody who desires them. Now, there are considerable precautions taken—although even they are not stringent enough—with regard to the sale of poisons, and I cannot help thinking that homicide by misadventure is quite as likely to occur from the incautious use of revolvers and such like firearms, as it is from drugs, and intentional homicide is still more likely. Whether it would be advisable to enforce in the case of the sale of revolvers all the regulations, or the principal of the regulations, which now exist with regard to the sale of poisons I really cannot say. One which I have chiefly in my mind is that the names of purchasers should be entered in a book, and that the articles should not be sold to any persons not known or recommended to the vendor. But there is one precaution which certainly might be taken, and which I think ought to be taken, and that is that the sale to children should be absolutely prohibited. It is quite fearful to think of the number of these deadly weapons which can be and are purchased by boys for a few shillings. Since I put this notice on the Paper I have received the following letter from a gentleman in Manchester with whom I am unacquainted. He says—

"A few weeks back I called at the Post Office, where I was horrified by seeing a telegraph boy with a revolver pointed at his temple, explaining some point to another telegraph boy. I cannot say that the revolver was loaded or not, but I do know that these boys in Her Majesty's Service are in the habit of carrying these dangerous weapons. The great cause of all this is the unseemly show bills posted on our public streets."

I cannot help saying that those murderous incidents which are now illustrated everywhere in bold characters on our dead walls seem most calculated to do enormous injury amongst the juvenile, and even amongst the adult population. I have also had sent to me an advertise-

ment which appeared in a newspaper, which offers six-chamber breech-loading revolvers, warranted to kill at thirty yards, at 6s. 8d., and gives a catalogue of other firearms which are sold at a still smaller price. Now, to come to the second point of the question, the practice of carrying these weapons through the streets and in public places, I venture to suggest, ought to be absolutely prohibited. It is a detestable American practice, which may be well enough suited to the half-civilized towns of the New World, but it is wholly inappropriate to the streets of London. Only the other day an American gentleman in a state of intoxication or excitement "emptied" (to use their own word) a revolver in a crowded thoroughfare and shot one man dead and wounded another. Two or three days ago a man armed with a loaded revolver was riding in a hansom cab, and on the cabman looking at him through the trap he pointed the revolver at his head. On the man being taken before the magistrates the utmost fine that could be inflicted upon him was 40s. for having a loaded firearm in his possession while drunk. I venture to think that is wholly inadequate. Not long ago a *Times* witness discharged five or six shots from his revolver at one of his companions, with whom he had had a little difference, across a crowded street—the Strand—and it is inexplicable how the passers-by escaped. Any person carrying a revolver is supposed to have a 10s. licence, but, as a matter of fact, the great majority of people have not these licences, and now steps are taken to enforce this law. There is another point in connection with carrying revolvers to which I would like to allude, and that is the new and growing custom of the criminal classes carrying and using revolvers when performing their various depredations. We continually find that where an attempt is made by the police to arrest a burglar, the burglar, to avoid capture, unhesitatingly discharges his revolver, and frequently wounds, and sometimes kills, his pursuer. On this point I hold in my hand a resolution which was passed on the 15th of February by the Grand Jury at the Norwich Assizes—

"Where persons convicted of burglary are found in possession of fire-arms, the Judge should have the power to add corporal punishment to the sentence."

The Earl of Milltown

It seems to me a strange thing that if a highway robbery is committed with violence—that is, if the robber knocks a man down—he can be sentenced to severe corporal punishment, but if a burglar is armed with one of these fearful weapons, he has no more punishment than if he carried an ordinary stick in his hand. One thing is very certain: unless this habit of the criminal classes carrying and using revolvers is put down, you must be prepared to arm the police with a similar weapon. It is monstrously unfair to send forth a man, no matter how brave — and I quite agree that the Metropolitan Police are amongst the bravest men in the world—armed with a short stick to attack and capture a desperate ruffian armed with a six-shooter. It is neither fair to the public nor to the police; it is not fair to the police, because you are asking them to engage in what may be a deadly struggle on wholly unequal terms; it is not fair to the public, because you are affording a ready means for desperate criminals to escape justice. I beg to ask the Question of which I have given notice.

EARL BROWNLOW: My Lords, a Question similar to that which is put by the noble Lord behind me (the Earl of Milltown) was put, in another place, to the Home Secretary a few days ago, and I am afraid that I shall be able to do very little more than give the answer which was given on that occasion by the Home Secretary, in another place. That answer was—

"That the Government had for some time had under consideration the question of taking measures to restrain the sale and use of revolvers. He (the Home Secretary) was not yet in a position to say whether legislation would be proposed to Parliament on the subject."

I should state that the points which have been urged by the noble Lord to-night have been under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. There seems some difficulty about applying the Acts relating to poisons for this reason. The person who orders a revolver may have a perfect right to have it, but that revolver may be passed on to other persons who would make bad use of it, and who ought not to have it. With regard to the sale of revolvers to young people, I think that is a very strong point, and what has been said by my noble Friend will re-

ceive the greatest attention at the hands of Her Majesty's Government. As to licensing, the noble Lord will of course be aware that it is necessary for persons possessing a revolver to have a gun licence which costs 10s., and the penalty for carrying a revolver, or pistol, or gun, without a licence is £10. I cannot help thinking that if there were more activity shown in the matter of those licences, it would have some effect in diminishing the evil complained of. I can only say, my Lords, that the whole matter, which is one of importance, will have the most careful attention of Her Majesty's Government.

LORD FITZGERALD: My Lords, I am sure your Lordships generally are agreed in viewing this matter as one of the greatest importance, and are glad to learn that it will receive the attention of Her Majesty's Government. It cannot be questioned that some legislation is necessary, and I think the principle upon which that legislation would proceed is to be found in the Explosives Act of 1883. By Section 3 of that Act it is provided that—

"Any person who has in his possession any explosive substance tending to endanger life or to injure property, whether the explosion does or does not take place, and whether injury is caused or not, shall be guilty of felony and punished accordingly."

Then the 4th section is—

"Any person who has in his possession any explosive substance under such circumstances as to give rise to a reasonable suspicion that he does not have it in his possession for a lawful object shall also be guilty of felony, unless he can show that he has it for a lawful purpose."

I do not suppose that in reference to the possession of revolvers the same degree of severity would be adopted, but I think the same degree of stringency ought to be applied, and when persons are found in possession of revolvers, either in the course of committing a criminal act or under such circumstances as to lead to the conclusion that they have it, not for a lawful purpose, but for some unlawful purpose, a heavy punishment should be imposed. Of course, the preparation of a measure of this kind is a matter of great complication, and requires great care. It is a subject of such magnitude that the initiation of any legislation upon it should lie with the Government, and I am glad to learn from the answer of the noble Lord opposite (Earl Brownlow) that the careful attention of Her Majesty's Government will be given to it.

HACKNEY CAB REGULATIONS.

OBSERVATIONS.

LORD DE ROS, in rising to call attention to the inconvenience and danger caused by hackney cabs plying for hire in the public thoroughfares, said:—My Lords, although this question deals with a subject which has not the merit of novelty, I think I need offer no apology to your Lordships for bringing the matter to your notice, because, unless something is done, the thoroughfares of London will be rendered absolutely impassable through the number of crawling cabs in the streets. In Bond Street, where, as your Lordships know, there are a number of very valuable shops, picture galleries, exhibitions, and so forth, I counted the other day no less than seven hansom cabs following each other and blocking up the road so that no carriage could pass without the greatest inconvenience; and even in less important thoroughfares the evil is also very great. Another matter which I think depends entirely on the public themselves is one which, I am afraid, will not be very well received. I allude to the servants standing at the doors whistling for cabs. Cabs come tearing in from all points, and it is only a wonder that there is not a collision. It is all very easy to find all these faults, but it is not so easy to suggest remedies. I would venture, however, to shadow forth one or two points which, I think, might possibly tend in the end to mitigate the evils of which I complain. In the first place, my Lords, I think that there are far too many cabs, and the granting of licences might be checked till the number of cabs is considerably reduced. Another point is that there should be more cab-stands, and I would suggest that after a cabman has set down his fare he should then proceed, under a penalty, to the nearest cabstand, and, in order to indicate that he is doing so, I think that some sort of sign, a little flag or something, might be hoisted on his cab. In the next place I may point out the cruelty to which the horses are subjected. In the hot weather some cab-horses are very hardly worked indeed; it would be a very great advantage to them to have a rest between

each fare. I know that there are very great difficulties in all these matters, and I have been told over and over again, "Oh, it is a very great convenience to be able to jump into a cab at a moment's notice;" but I cannot help thinking that the advantages which would be gained by the absence of these cabs would greatly outweigh the convenience of their presence. I feel certain that, unless some steps are taken in this direction, the London cabs will very soon establish a complete monopoly of the principal thoroughfares of the Metropolis.

EARL BROWNLOW: My Lords, I thought it would be well for your Lordships to hear the opinion of the Chief Commissioner of Police, as being the Chief of those men who had to attend to the traffic about the streets. Therefore, I asked the Chief Commissioner to give me a memorandum on the subject, and in the communication which I have received from him he says that the evil of crawling cabs is one which will exist just so long as the public continue to take up cabs in the streets instead of from cab-ranks; and he suggests that there should be an increase in the number of cab-stands. The whole question has been discussed over and over again. I can only say that I think the matter is one that must be left entirely to the police. I am quite sure that the police will do whatever is possible to mitigate the nuisance. This is one of those things which I think must be given some latitude, and I really do not see any way beyond proposing to increase the number of cab-stands by which whatever evil there may be can be remedied.

LORD COLVILLE OF CULROSS: My Lords, without any intention to prolong the discussion, I would just say that I think it very desirable that all licensed vehicles should, after dark, be compelled to carry lamps. I am quite aware that at present hansom cabs do carry lights; but four-wheelers and other vehicles are not compelled to do so. I think a regulation to this effect would obviate a great deal of the danger which undoubtedly does exist at present.

INDIA (EMIGRATION).

Government of India, Despatch No. 1, of 22nd January, 1889; Revenue and Agricultural Department (Emigration): Address for. — (*The Lord Stanley of Alderley.*)

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Appointed: The Lords following, with the Chairman of Committees, were named of the Committee:—

E. Cadogan
L. Privy Seal
M. Bath
E. Lathom
L. Chamberlain
E. Winchilsea and Nottingham
E. Lindsay
E. Waldegrave
E. Bathurst
E. Carnarvon
E. Milltown
E. Belmore
E. Powis
E. Morley
E. Amherst
E. Camperdown
E. Sydney
E. Wharncliffe
E. de Montalt
V. Gordon
(E. Aberdeen)
V. Hutchinson
(E. Donoughmore)
V. Hardinge
V. Oxenbridge
L. de Ros
L. Clinton
L. Balfour
L. Boyle
E. Cork and Orrery
L. Digby
L. Thurlow
L. Hopetoun
E. Hopetoun
L. Foxford
E. Limerick
L. Colchester
L. Wigan
(E. Crawford)
L. Poltimore
L. Sudeley
L. Wenlock
L. Belper
L. Houghton
L. Hartismere
(L. Henniker)
L. Sandhurst
L. Sudley
(E. Arran)
L. Colville of Culross

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 1st March, 1889.

SAVINGS BANKS (1888).

On the Motion of Mr. MACLURE (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford), it was ordered that a Return from each Savings Bank in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, containing, in columns, the names of the officers, their respective salaries, and other allowances, if any; the amount of security each gives; the number of accounts remaining open; the total amount owing to depositors; the total amount invested with the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt; the rate of interest paid to depositors on the various amounts of deposit, and the average rate of interest on all accounts; the total amount of Government Stock standing

to the credit of depositors; and the total amount of the separate Surplus Fund, on the 20th day of November, 1888; the rate per centum per annum on the capital of the Bank for the expenses of management; the annual number of receipts from Depositors; the annual number of payments; the average amount of receipts; the average amount of payments; the number and amount of annuities granted; the annual expenses of management, inclusive of all payments and salaries, for the year ended the 20th day of November, 1888; also the year in which business commenced in each bank, and the name of the day or days, and the number of hours in the week, on which the banks are open for the deposit and withdrawal of moneys; including in such Return a list of all such savings banks as, under the provisions of the Act 26 Vic. c. 14, or otherwise, have been closed and have transferred their funds, or any part thereof, to the Post Office Savings Banks; showing, in each case, the number of such banks, as well as the number and amount of Depositors' accounts so transferred, and the amount of compensation, if any, made to all or any of the Officers of such Banks respectively; and showing also the years in which such Banks were respectively opened and closed, and the number and amount of their Depositors' balances, and the number of days and hours in each week on which the same Banks were open for public business at the close of the year next preceding the date of such closing; distinguishing the same, as in the form of the Return, for each separate county, as well as collectively, for England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and for the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 301, of Session 1888.

QUESTIONS.

MAJOR HARSTON.

CAPTAIN SELWYN (Cambridge, Wisbech) asked the Financial Secretary for War whether he is aware that Major Harston, an officer of the Canadian Militia, gave up important business in Canada on receipt of a letter from the Surveyor General of Ordnance, telling him "to convert three Martini rifles on his plan, and to send the bill for the work to the War Office"; whether his attention has been drawn to a letter of 11th June, 1888, in which the Director of Artillery told Major Harston to "work out the alterations and send them the bill for the work"; whether this work was under the supervision of the Special Committee on Small Arms, which recognized that Major Harston had successfully converted the Martini Henry rifle into a magazine rifle; whether the rifle so converted is fired with twice the rapidity of the new Government rifle; whether Major Harston has repeatedly applied for but received no payment for the work done under instructions from the War Office Authorities; and whether he is aware that the sum actually expended by Major Harston amounts to £1,395, and that the Special Committee on Small Arms expressed the opinion that the charges were most moderate?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): All the circumstances connected with Major Harston's claim have been submitted to the Secretary of State, who has referred the case to the Solicitor to the Treasury. As soon as his opinion reaches the War Office, the case will be settled without any unnecessary delay.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether, considering the necessity of securing the fair treatment of inventors, he will lay on the Table the correspondence which has taken place in this case, and give Members an opportunity of seeing it?

MR. BRODRICK: I think the hon. Gentleman had better give notice of that Question.

CAPTAIN SELWYN: How long is this unfortunate man to remain without payment?

MR. BRODRICK: I can assure the hon. Member that no delay will take place.

POST OFFICE OFFICIALS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General what number of Post Office officials were dismissed last year for irregularities, and what number of Post Office officials were convicted of offences in connection with

their duties in the United Kingdom last year?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): During the year 1888 the number of Post Office servants who were dismissed or called upon to resign was 335. Of these, the number convicted of offences in connection with their duties was 117. The total number of Post Office servants, excluding those employed in an unestablished capacity, is above 56,000.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) (for Mr. HOWARD VINCENT, Sheffield, Central) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor; and, in such case, when it will be introduced?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The Government hope to be able to introduce a Bill, probably in another place, dealing with this important and interesting subject; but I am unable to state the time, or to give any further particulars.

SAVING LIFE AT SEA ACT.

MR. BARTLEY (for Mr. HOWARD VINCENT) asked the President of the Board of Trade if the Committee appointed in November, under the Saving Life at Sea Act of last Session, has yet presented the rules they recommend for adoption; and, if not, when they are likely to be received and promulgated?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): I have communicated with the Chairman of the Life Saving Appliances Committee. He informs me that the Committee are now in Session. They have held several meetings, and no time is being lost in formulating the rules, having due regard to the complicated nature of some of the subjects under discussion.

IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE BY A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

MR. MATTHEW KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if the Lord Chancellor has had under his consideration certain letters addressed to him by Mr. James H. M'Kelvey, of Mountjoy, Omagh, touching an alleged outrage by Mr. Samuel M'Keown, a Justice of the Peace for Tyrone; if it is a fact that Stewart, who claims to be the injured party, is practically prevented from seeking the ordinary legal remedy in such cases, by reason of the fact that he is in part dependent upon Mr. M'Keown as a cottier tenant, and again could only prosecute his case before a Bench of Magistrates of whom Mr. M'Keown would be one; and if, in the circumstances, the Lord Chancellor will reconsider his decision, and investigate the charge made before this Justice of the Peace?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): I am informed that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland received a letter from Mr. M'Kelvey alleging that Mr. M'Keown, J.P., had poisoned a dog belonging to Stewart, and that the Lord Chancellor stated in reply that the ordinary tribunals provided by law had ample power to investigate and deal with that complaint; that the special jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor over magistrates cannot be used in aid of, or as auxiliary to, legal proceedings between individuals, and that it was undesirable that the Lord Chancellor should interfere to the prejudice of either party. There does not appear to be any reason to prevent Stewart from taking his ordinary legal remedy; nor is it the fact that the magistrate concerned would be one of the Bench. The Lord Chancellor sees no ground to alter the decision he has arrived at in the matter.

IRELAND—THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the fact that the Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork, and Galway, which receive amongst them a Parliamentary grant of over £5,000 a-year for medical teaching and the repairs and maintenance of buildings, were, at the last examinations of the Royal University of Ireland, beaten in award of first-class honours by the Catholic University School of Medicine, and that those Queen's Colleges were again defeated in the higher test of first-class exhibitions by the Catholic University School of

Medicine, which carried off as many exhibitions as the Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork, and Galway combined; and whether, under these circumstances, he will consider the advisability of recommending a Parliamentary grant to the School of Medicine of the Catholic University?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Report which I have received, in replying to this Question, suggests that the result of one examination cannot be taken as a fair test, and it would further appear from them that each of the institutions between which a comparison is made could establish a fair claim to pre-eminence if allowed to choose its own test.

CRUELTY TO PAUPER CHILDREN.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, whether his attention has been drawn to the unduly severe flogging of a pauper boy at Ulverston. Whether it appears from the proceedings before the Ulverston Board of Guardians that similar charges of cruelty to pauper children had been preferred against the official guilty in this case. And, whether he will direct an inquiry into the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, St. George's, Tower Hamlets): I have communicated with the Guardians of the Ulverston Union on the subject of this Question. I learn from them that the pauper boy referred to was attending a Board School, and that the punishment was by the master of that school. The boy was examined by the medical officer of the workhouse and by four of the Guardians, who considered that the boy had been severely and unduly punished. There had, however, been no previous charge made to the Guardians of cruelty to pauper children by the master of the school, and the Guardians, after inquiring into the case and hearing the statements of the schoolmaster, appear to have been satisfied that although the boy had been very severely punished, there had been great provocation on the part of the boy. The Guardians, after fully discussing the subject, determined to proceed with the next business. The Local Government Board have no jurisdiction whatever with regard to the master of the Board School, but I have drawn the attention of the Education Department to the facts, and they have informed me that they will communicate with the managers of the school, and, if necessary, direct further inquiry.

THE CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether, before filling up the office of Chairman of the Customs Department, vacant through the lamented death of Sir Charles Du Cane, he will consider the advisability of carrying out the reforms suggested by Sir Algernon West, given before the Select Committee on the Revenue Estimates last year?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): The question of the amalgamation of the Customs and Inland Revenue is still under the consideration of a Royal Commission, and I am unable to say more than that pending their Report it is not probable the vacancy will be filled.

IRELAND—RELIEF OF ASSIGNEES OF LEASES UNDER "THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887."

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if his attention has been directed to a recent decision of Mr. Commissioner Greer, reported in the Belfast newspapers, whereby it was decided that the assignee of any lease bearing date between the years 1826 and 1832 could not obtain relief under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887," unless he could produce the consent in writing of his landlord to such assignment; and if such be a correct interpretation of the prohibitive Statute 7 Geo. IV. c. 29, as referred to by Mr. Greer, what steps the Government will take to amend its provisions so as admit the assignee of such leases within the operation of the Irish Land Law Acts 1881, 1887, and 1888?

MR. MADDEN: I have not yet been able to obtain a copy of the decision referred to. I have asked for it however, and hope to receive it shortly.

IRELAND—THE LAND COMMISSION.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary whether his attention has been called to the strong protests made by the different Boards of

Poor Law Guardians in Ulster against the alleged injustice and inconsistency of the alterations made by the Land Commission in the temporary adjustment of judicial rents for last year; whether he will give copies of the instructions sent to the scrutineers and to the Excise officers on whose return of prices this alteration is said to have been grounded; and, whether he will grant a Return showing the prices of produce furnished, and the reports made, by these scrutineers and Excise Officers in respect of the different districts over which they were appointed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that protests have been received from some Boards of Poor Law Guardians in Ulster against the order and schedule of alterations of judicial rents for the year 1888, published by the Irish Land Commission in December last. The Commissioners have no objection to furnishing copies of the instructions sent by them to the scrutineers of prices and Excise officers employed. The alterations in the judicial rents, as specified in the schedule, were arrived at by applying the information the Commissioners received from the sources indicated, according to the instructions afforded by the 29th section of the Act; but the Commissioners adhere to the opinion, already expressed on several previous occasions, that they should not be required to furnish returns of the information supplied to them or of their methods of procedure.

IRELAND—EVICTION AT NEWTOWNARDS.

MR. M'CARTAN asked the Chief Secretary whether his attention has been called to a paragraph published in the *North Down Herald* of 15th February last, wherein it is stated that—

"An eviction took place near Newtownards on Monday last (11th February). A broken-down man, a sick woman, and their children were turned outinto the snow;"

whether he is aware that this eviction took place on the townland of Ballyskeagh on the estate of Lord Londonderry, and was conducted under the personal supervision of his agent, Mr. Brownlow, J.P.; whether this eviction was due to the inability of the tenant to pay some arrears of rent; whether it was arranged with the agent that if the tenant paid £40 upon a certain date the arrears were to be extinguished and the proceedings stopped; whether the tenant, having been unable to pay on the day mentioned, offered the amount agreed upon a few days afterwards, but the offer was rejected, the eviction proceeded with, and the family thrown out in the snow; and, whether, considering this and other similar cases, the Government will bring in a Bill to deal with arrears of rent in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is true that an eviction took place near Newtownards on February 11, but the man evicted was not broken down, and is now, I understand, earning £1 a week in Belfast. The woman was not sick; was certified by the doctor to have nothing wrong with her, and she and the rest of the family declined to use a covered conveyance provided by the agents to convey them to the workhouse or wherever they might desire to go. The circumstances under which Mr. Brownlow acted were, I am informed, of the following character:—Nearly five years ago (April, 1884) proceedings were taken for two years' rent, but owing to illness in the tenant's family, the proceedings were stopped, and Lord Londonderry gave the tenant a donation of £5. Two years afterwards an ejectment was taken out for three years' rent, but withdrawn on a promise from the tenant to sell his tenant right. A year afterwards a second ejectment was issued for four years' rent, but further proceedings were delayed on account of repeated promises by the tenant to sell the tenant right. The agent then offered to take £40 in full discharge of the arrears of £79 9*s.* due, on the express condition that the tenant was to sell the farm. The tenant subsequently offered £40, but would not fulfil the conditions as to sale. A warrant for possession was obtained on December 13, 1888, but the agent consented to stay execution for a month, and, as a matter of fact, waited until the warrant was about to expire. It is evident that no Arrears Bill would meet a case of this kind.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Is it the fact that the sum of £40 was tendered by the tenant; that the doctor certified that the tenant's wife was seriously ill, but that she was nevertheless removed; and is it correct that the landlord the next day blew up with

dynamite the house from which the tenant had been evicted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer the last Question, but the house, I presume, belonged to the landlord.

MR. SEXTON: It was built by the tenant.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The fact that the woman refused to use the covered conveyance offered by the landlord to carry her wheresoever she wished is, I think, a strong proof of the fact that she was not seriously ill. And I may remark that the period at which the eviction was carried out was deferred until the last day upon which it could be legally exercised.

MR. SEXTON: I am told that Dr. Parker, the Coroner, examined the woman and certified that she was very ill.

THE DECCAN MINING COMPANY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether anything has yet been settled as to the Deccan Mining Company; whether, notwithstanding the Report of the Committee of this House, the Nizam has been induced to continue the concessions to the Company on such terms that, though they have yet discovered nothing whatever, the shares have gone up to a high figure, almost equal to the nominal value put on them by the promoters, as reported in the money article of the *Times* of 27th February; and, whether Her Majesty's Government in India or in this country have approved of the arrangements made?

THE UNDER SECRERARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The Secretary of State is not aware of any arrangement having been come to by the Government of the Nizam in reference to the concession of the Deccan Company. The Secretary of State has no knowledge of the price of the Company's shares. No arrangement has been submitted for the approval of Her Majesty's Government, either here or in India.

THE BURMAH RUBY MINES.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India if any and what "provisions for renewal" are attached to the seven years' lease of the Burmah Ruby Mines granted to Messrs. Streeter; and, if there are provisions for renewal, whether those provisions were set out when tenders were invited?

SIR J. GORST: The lease of the Ruby Mines to Messrs. Streeter provides for renewal at the end of seven years, unless the Government decides to carry on the mines itself, or unless some third party makes a higher offer for a fresh lease than the licencees are willing to give. The provisions for renewal were not set out in the invitation for tenders, but it was intimated that clauses would be inserted in the lease "as to such other matters and details as might be found necessary."

CIVIL SERVICE—SIR ALFRED SLADE

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Sir Alfred Slade, Receiver General of Inland Revenue, is a director of a "Gold and Exploration Company;" and, whether he has the sanction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for accepting that appointment in violation of the ordinary rule of the Treasury Department; and, if not, whether he is to continue to hold the appointment of Receiver General?

MR. GOSCHEN: I am informed by Sir Alfred Slade that he is not a Director of any Gold Company, nor has he accepted any Directorship since the Treasury Minute of the 29th of November last. He was for a few weeks connected with the Gold Exploration Company, which, he thought, would affect his property in the Transvaal, but he retired from it a year ago.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: May I ask if the right hon. Gentleman has ascertained the character of this Company, and is aware that it has been wound up? Does he think it right that a person holding the appointment of Receiver General of Inland Revenue should become a Director of a Company of this kind?

MR. GOSCHEN: I have no knowledge of the circumstances to which the hon. Gentleman alludes. I have no information beyond that which I have communicated to the House.

NAVAL CONTRACTS.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State

for the Home Department, did he, on 7th January, when speaking at the Govan Election, promise that the naval work of this country should be put out to contract instead of relying on the Dockyards; and, if so, on whose authority he made the promise?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): I had no authority to make, nor did I make, any promise either verbally or substantially corresponding to that attributed to me in the hon. Gentleman's Question.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): May I on this subject ask the hon. Gentleman if he is accurately reported in the *Scotsman* of January 8, the day following the meeting at Govan, when he is stated to have used these words—

"Mr. Stuart-Wortley said he had come down from London to say that Lord Salisbury's Ministry favoured Sir John Pender's candidature, and were anxious that he should be returned. From a conversation he had had with the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary for War, he knew it was the policy of the Government to place Dockyard work out to contract on a large scale."

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM: I took my information from the *Glasgow Herald.*

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: The report in the *Glasgow Herald* does not sustain the allegation in the Question of the hon. Member for Bristol (Mr. Cossham). As to the extract from the *Scotsman,* read by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), of which he has not given me notice, and which does not profess to be a verbatim report, I must decline to be made responsible. What I did say at Govan referred to present policy and to past indications of it, and I expressly disclaimed knowledge of Admiralty programmes. I announced no future change of policy, and certainly I did not, as some London newspaper reported me, say that something about to be done was to be conditional on the election of the candidate in whose support I was speaking.

MR. BUCHANAN: The hon. Gentleman is reported to have stated that a few days before he went down to take part in the Govan election he had a conversation with the First Lord of the Admiralty. May I ask the noble Lord if that is the fact?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): As I saw that certain language was attributed to my hon. Friend, I asked him to send me a verbatim report of what he said, and from that report it would appear that the summaries that were given of it totally misrepresented his speech. What he did say was, that he had seen the heads of the War Office and the Admiralty, and that the policy of the Government was not to run up Government establishments, but to keep them at a certain level, and to put certain work out to private yards. That is the policy of the Government, and I venture to say that it will be the policy of every future Government.

MR. BUCHANAN: Are we to understand that before the hon. Gentleman went down to Govan he had a conversation with the noble Lord as to what he was to say?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Certainly not.

IRELAND—JOHN LAVERTY.

MR. M'CARTAN asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he has received a memorial from Archibald Laverty, of Collyer Street, Belfast, with reference to his only son, John, who, in September 1882, when only 13 years of age, without the consent of his parents, enlisted in the Royal Navy, and who was some time ago arrested as a deserter for not having returned to his ship on the expiration of his leave of absence: whether he is aware that the prescribed forms of engagement were presented to John Laverty for signature, and that they were never signed by him: and, whether, considering the circumstances under which the boy was brought from his home, the dangerous state of health into which his mother has fallen in consequence of his absence, and the other facts mentioned in the memorial, he will consider the prayer of the father and advise the discharge of the son?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Letters were received from Archibald Laverty in July and August, 1887, asking for the discharge of his son on the plea that he entered the Navy without the consent of his parents. This, however, is not the case, as the paper bears his mother's signature. Neither is it the case that the forms of engagement were not signed

by John Laverty. The continuous service paper is in the office, duly completed and signed by him. No application for the discharge of his son was received from the father until five years after his son joined the Navy, or until July 1887, when he deserted from the *Duke of Wellington*. He was arrested last month, and is now undergoing his punishment for desertion on board the *Duke of Wellington*. I do not propose to interfere with the ordinary course of the service, or to sanction his discharge except under conditions contained in the Queen's Regulations.

ADMIRALTY—H.M.S. "NILE."

MR. HANBURY asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, for how long H.M.S. *Nile*, launched on March 27th last, remained at Pembroke before being brought to Portsmouth for completion; whether she was allowed to retain her launching gear the whole time and until after her arrival at Portsmouth; whether, on her being docked at Portsmouth, the red lead with which her bottom was coated was found to have peeled off in large patches, and the submerged platings and rivets of this perfectly new vessel were found to be seriously corroded, especially along the water line, the heads of the rivets in many instances being completely eaten away; whether the *Narcissus* was lately found to be in a similar condition; whether red lead was used upon the bottoms of both these ships; and, if so, was it recommended by the responsible dockyard officials, and, if not, by whom; and, if the damage was not due in either case to the use of red lead, to what was it due?

LORD G. HAMILTON: There was an interval of ten months between the launch of the *Nile* at Pembroke and her being docked, that period having been occupied in putting in her machinery and getting her sufficiently completed to proceed to Portsmouth. A portion of the launching gear could not be removed until her arrival at the latter port, owing to there being no dock at Pembroke of sufficient size to admit a ship of her dimensions. The red lead coating was found, on the ship being docked, to have peeled off in places, causing some oxidation of the plates and rivets where this had occurred, but in no case could the corrosion be called serious. The *Narcissus* suffered much in the same way. Any damage that has occurred cannot be attributed to the use of red lead as a protective, but to the fact of its not having, in the present instances, afforded the protection that previous experience had given cause to anticipate. As a protective it has given hitherto sufficient satisfaction for the Admiralty to sanction its use. Endeavour will be made to detect the cause of failure in the present cases, and the necessary steps will be taken to prevent a recurrence of the circumstance.

MR. HANBURY: Was the use of red lead recommended by the Dockyard officials?

LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes; it is almost the invariable custom to use red lead.

IRELAND—POOR LAW OFFICERS.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the additional and very onerous duties imposed upon Poor Law Officers in Ireland under the Franchise Acts of 1885, and to the great reluctance manifested by Boards of Guardians to vote adequate remuneration in such cases, the Government proposes to make a Grant on this account for the present year, as was done in 1885?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I quite sympathize with the Poor Law Officers in the matter mentioned; but, as I have explained in reply to former Questions, it is one which concerns not Ireland alone, but the whole of the United Kingdom, and could only be dealt with by a general measure of legislation.

IRELAND—CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has made any inquiries into the antecedents or character of the persons being Resident Magistrates, Crown Solicitors, and others intrusted with the administration of "The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1887;" and whether, in view of recent events, he will cause such inquiries to be made?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have instituted no such general inquiry into the private history of any servants of the Government as the hon. Member seems

to desire. Nor can the hon. Member be serious in suggesting that I should do so. A particular charge against Captain Seagrave is, as the hon. Member is aware, being investigated at the present moment.

MR. CHANCE: I do not ask as to any particular inquiry, but whether any general inquiry has been made into the antecedents or character of these persons.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My reply is that I have instituted no such inquiry.

MR. CHANCE: Has the right hon. Gentleman made no inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought I had answered that Question. I have made no inquiry.

MR. CHANCE: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to make any inquiry?

No answer was returned.

IRELAND—FATHER M'FADDEN.

MR. WILLIAM SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he will state to the House who was responsible for the arrangements made in connection with the arrest of Father M'Fadden?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the County Inspector was responsible for the arrangements in question.

MR. SUMMERS inquired whether any action had been taken in regard to the matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member means with regard to the County Inspector, I am not aware that any action is required.

IRELAND—MR. MORONEY.

MR. SUMMERS asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, in view of the statement on the subject of Mr. Moroney's health, that were contained in his letter to Mr. Armitage, he will consent to lay upon the Table of the House the Reports that were made by the medical officers who examined Mr. Moroney during the period of his confinement in gaol?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The statements in my letter to Mr. Armitage related solely to the different versions of the Moroney affair, which the Nationalist Press and others gave before and after Moroney's release, according as it suited the controversial exigencies of the moment to describe Moroney as a suffering martyr or a triumphant hero. No light would be thrown on this question by the production of the doctors' Reports.

MR. C. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that no light could be thrown on the actual condition of Moroney while in prison?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not discussing the actual condition of Mr. Moroney, but the relative versions of his condition given before and after his arrest.

THE EDUCATION CODE (1888)—SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether membership by the principal teacher of any public elementary school of a County or Town Council, or attendance at its sittings when held during the hours in which the school open, is compatible with Article 96, Section (*d*) of the Education Code, 1888?

SIR W. HART DYKE: Membership by the principal teacher under the circumstances mentioned is not compatible with Article 96, Section (*d*) of the Code. If this Rule is violated by any school, the result would be the forfeiture of the grant.

INLAND REVENUE—BEER AND WINE LICENCES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the case of a person who was summoned by the Inland Revenue authorities at West Ham Police Court, on Wednesday last, for selling intoxicants without a licence, whether the samples upon which the prosecution was instituted were taken so long ago as October 18 last; upon what date those samples were analyzed; what proportion of alcohol was found in them; and why proceedings against the seller were delayed for more than four months?

MR. JACKSON: Samples of so-called beer and wine were purchased on October 18th last as stated. The samples of beer were analyzed on October 19th, the day following, and found to contain 3·8 per cent. of proof spirit. The samples of wine were analyzed a few

days later, and were found to contain 15·6 per cent and 17·5 per cent of proof spirit respectively. Proceedings were directed to be instituted early in December, but have been delayed, owing to the indisposition of the analyst concerned in the case.

THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE BAHAMAS.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Chief Justice of the Bahamas can legally sentence any person to be flogged for contempt of Court; and, if so, under what Statute or authority has the power to pass such a sentence been conferred?

BARON H. DE WORMS: There is no local Statute authorizing such a sentence; and the Colonial Law Officer is of opinion that, in inflicting it, the Chief Justice exceeded the summary powers of punishment vested in him.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: What course does the Secretary of State for the Colonies propose to take with respect to the Chief Justice of the Bahamas, who has illegally caused a subject of the Queen to receive 36 lashes? What remedy would he afford an Englishman under such circumstances, in order to recover damages?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Secretary of State, on hearing the details, sent a letter to the Chief Justice informing him that the most serious consequences would ensue if any breach of the law were committed.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I do not want to know what would happen to the Judge if he repeated his offence. What would happen to him for the illegal act which he has already committed?

MR. PICKERSGILL: Is it a fact that the victim in this case was a black man, and that that is the ground for the absence of effective action against the Chief Justice?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I do not think it was a question of colour. The offence committed was of a very serious nature. It consisted of a murderous attack upon the Judge in Court.

MR. PICKERSGILL: On an early day I will put a Question to the Attorney General on the subject.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. E. WEBSTER, Q.C., Isle of Wight): As I have been appealed to, I will at once state that, although there are old authorities which say corporal punishment might be inflicted in gross cases of contempt of Court, I do not think those authorities should be binding in Courts in which English law prevails. In my opinion, the Chief Justice acted illegally and in a way that was not justified by law. It appears, however, from the papers, that a murderous attack had been made upon the Judge by this particular man. The Attorney General of the Colony said the offence was so serious that it had been intended to indict the man for felony—that is, for the attack upon the Judge.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department the following Question: Did Head Constable Preston visit the prisoners James Mullett and Patrick Nally in Millbank; if so, on what business; how did he secure access to them; and by whose orders was admission granted; were those men brought over from Ireland by judicial process; and, if so, what was it; was there in Millbank, or any English gaol, a prisoner named Tracy brought over from Ireland since the *Times* Commission began; would he state what was his sentence and offence; by what process and at whose instance was his removal from an Irish prison obtained; was Tracy visited by Head Constable Preston; and under what circumstances was the visit obtained?

MR. M'CARTAN had on the paper the following Question:—To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he can state on what date Thomas Tracy, a bail prisoner now in Millbank Prison, was removed from Belfast Gaol to Millbank, and by what authority he was removed; whether he was accompanied from Belfast by a prison warder, who still remains here; whether he will give the names of the persons who visited him since his arrival, and by whom, and for what purpose the application to visit was made in each case; whether and how often Tracy has been visited by Head Constable Preston, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and if Preston visited him on behalf of the *Times* to procure evidence for the Special Commission;

and whether there is any limit to the time during which a prisoner from an Irish gaol, alleged to be required as a witness in a trial here, may be kept in a prison in England without being produced at such trial?

MR. MATTHEWS: I will answer the Question of the hon. Member for North Longford and that of the hon. Member for South Down at the same time. Mullett and Nally were not visited by Head Constable Preston. They were brought over from Ireland under order of the Special Commission for the purpose of giving evidence. A prisoner named Tracy is in Millbank. His offence was making use of threatening language, and his sentence was to find bail to keep the peace and be of good behaviour for 12 months, or in default to be imprisoned for that time. The removal of Tracy took place, I understand, under similar circumstances to that of Mullett and Nally. He was accompanied by a prison warder, who still remains here. He has been twice visited by Mr. Preston, in pursuance of a request of Mr. Soames. The purpose of the application to visit was not stated. These visits were allowed in accordance with the ordinary rules. I am not aware of any limit of time during which a prisoner may be detained if his presence is required by the Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether it is the view of the Government that a subpœna from the High Court has the effect of a *habeas corpus*, and that it withdraws prisoners from the gaols, and compels their production in Courts of Law in England?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask for notice of that Question.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I understand the Home Secretary to say that this prisoner was visited by Preston, agent for Mr. Soames, the solicitor for the *Times*. Was that under an order of the Commission? I want to understand by what practice of prisons in England Mr. Soames, the solicitor to the *Times*, had a right to send an agent in to a prisoner to communicate with him in the prison?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Question refers to Tracy. Tracy is a surety prisoner, and, according to the ordinary prison rules, he is entitled to receive a visit, I think once a week, and the practice of the Prison Commissioners in England is, with that frequency and not more, to admit any solicitor or other visitor to see a prisoner, provided the prisoner does not object to see him.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Do I understand from the Home Secretary that the visits made by friends of the prisoner under these rules are construed to mean a visit of an Irish constable under the order of a solicitor?

MR. MATTHEWS: There is nothing in the rules to prevent an Irish constable from visiting any prisoner.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the attention of the Chief Secretary for Ireland been called to the answer of the Home Secretary—namely, that Preston, an Irish constable, at the instance of Mr. Soames, as private solicitor for a paper called the *Times*, and acting under his instructions, visited a particular prisoner, and took his statement? I wish to know how that came to be, and what it is that brings Head Constable Preston to London?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Member has mistaken my answer. The person I mentioned who came as the representative of Mr. Soames was a visitor of Tracy, and not Mullett.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How comes it that Head Constable Preston, an Irish constable, at the instance of Mr. Soames, visits any prisoner?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not see, on the face of it, the cogency of the Question. The hon. Gentleman ought to put the Question on the Paper.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not wish to misunderstand the Home Secretary. Do I understand him to say that this constable visited Tracy at his (Tracy's) own request and desire, which is what is meant by the prison rules?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information on that subject.

MR. M'CARTAN: Was the application made by Mr. Soames or by Preston, and was Preston's interview in the presence of a warder or not?

MR. A. B. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I wish to ask whether any private solicitor, practising in England, may employ a constable to visit a prisoner for the purpose of getting evidence?

MR. MATTHEWS: The application to visit was made by Mr. Soames. In regard to the person whom the solicitor employed, solicitors are not, of course,

entitled to the services of police constables while they are on duty.

MR. M'CARTAN: Did the visit take place in the presence of a warder?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not informed whether the interview was in the presence of a warder.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to know whether you can inform me that a warrant or subpœna from the Special Commission can produce Irish prisoners from the Irish gaols practically without *habeas corpus?* I wish to know whether we can see these orders? Are they at the Home Office, or at any place where inspection can be had, or has Mr. Soames got them?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Home Office acts at the request of the Lords Justices of Ireland. The only information I have from the Lord Lieutenant is to inform me that certain persons were required to be witnesses in England, and I was requested to name an officer to receive them and keep them in safe custody while here.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is there power under the Special Commission to issue *habeas corpus?*

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I must ask for notice of that Question. As I read the Act, I think it is clear that the Special Commissioners have the same powers as a Judge of any of the High Courts of Justice.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any officials of the British Museum agreed to give evidence in the Special Commission Court of the genuineness of the letters now admitted to be forgeries; if so, who those officials were; upon what terms they agreed to give such evidence; and whether the acceptance of such engagements was compatible with their official obligations?

MR. JACKSON: The Treasury has no information, nor have I, of the circumstances referred to in the hon. Member's Question; but I have learnt from the authorities of the British Museum that two members of the staff were consulted on behalf of the *Times* as experts. They acted, however, entirely in their private capacity, and entirely in their own time.

MR. SEXTON: I will call attention to the subject on the Vote.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I would ask the Home Secretary on whose authority Mr. Robert Anderson handed confidential papers in his possession, in his official capacity, to a man calling himself Le Caron (a witness for the *Times* newspaper), to be taken away by him and examined and used by Le Caron and Mr. Houston?

MR. MATTHEWS: Mr. Anderson's action in the matter referred to by the right hon. Gentleman was without my cognizance; but, so far as I am acquainted with the circumstances of the case, he acted in accordance with what was due to the Special Commission. I am informed that Mr. Anderson has been summoned as a witness before the Commission, and his evidence will no doubt fully explain his conduct.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Did the Commission direct Mr. Anderson to hand over confidential papers to Le Caron through Houston?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir. I conveyed nothing of the kind, and did not intend to say anything of the kind.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Then he did hand over the papers without authority from the Commission or the Home Secretary.

MR. MATTHEWS: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not wish the Home Secretary to add anything. I ask him to say something.

MR. H. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether the following words are correctly reported in "Hansard," vol. 329, p. 426, as used by him in debate upon the Parnell Commission Bill, second reading, July 24, 1888:—

> "That whole case (the 'O'Donnell v. Walter' suit) which I opened, I was prepared to prove, and if I am counsel for the *Times* again, shall be prepared to prove. The evidence (is) available when it is wanted, but I should be unworthy of my position if I allowed myself to use it for any other purposes."

And whether, in his opening speech in the case of "O'Donnell v. Walter," he did not include the *fac simile* letter now proved to have been a forgery? I will supplement that by the following:—Whether he took any steps to repudiate responsibility thrust upon him by his client, Mr. Walter, in the article in the *Times* of July 7, which stated that these charges against Mr. Parnell were formulated by the head of the English Bar, which was a guarantee that in his

judgment he was able to prove what he says?

SIR R. E. WEBSTER: With regard to the last Question put to me, and of which the hon. Member did not give me the slightest notice, it is impossible for me to answer it. I have not seen the article; but I will look at it and answer on Monday. With regard to the Question on the Paper, the quotation from *Hansard* is, I believe, accurate, but the hon. Member must be kind enough to refer to the passage immediately preceding that quoted, in which I stated distinctly that I had no information whatever except that given me as counsel for the *Times*, and I referred, as the extract clearly shows, to the evidence which, as such counsel, I was prepared to lay before the Court, and neither directly nor indirectly did I express any opinion of my own. I must be allowed to add that, though the date of my speech is correctly given, I did not speak for or against the Bill, but simply spoke in answer to personal observations made against me by members of my own profession.

SIR W. HARCOURT asked the First Lord of the Treasury by what Department of the Government the officers of the Irish Constabulary in London have been placed at the disposal of the *Times* newspaper, and how it comes that Chief Constable Gallagher and Sergeant Fawcett received and obeyed orders given to them by Mr. Shannon, an agent for the *Times* newspaper, as deposed to by those officers in Court on the 26th of February?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No instructions of the kind indicated have been given by any Department, nor have any orders been given to the constables named, or any others by an agent of the *Times*. Mr. Shannon, as the Chief Secretary for Ireland stated yesterday, requested these men to go to the same hotel as Pigott and prevent him from being mobbed or otherwise annoyed—a course which, if proper in itself, as I think it was, certainly does not become improper because the man Pigott has been proved to be a scoundrel. I would add that both the constables named are in London in consequence of a subpœna served on them.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has quite appreciated my Question. I do not think his answer touches it in any respect. How came the Irish constable to be directed by Mr. Shannon in any way or to do anything, and why did he say, in his sworn evidence, that he was ordered by Mr. Shannon, and went in consequence of those orders? Those are the words given—that the constables acted upon the orders of Mr. Shannon. I ask, How is it that Irish constables are acting, according to their own testimony, under the orders of the agents of the *Times*?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman asks me a Question as to evidence given in a Court of Law. The way to obtain that information as to the evidence is by cross-examination in the Court. I have stated the information of which I am in possession, and for which I am responsible, and I can give the right hon. Gentleman no other answer.

SIR W. HARCOURT: With great respect to the right hon. Gentleman, I would say that the place is here. I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether these officers, in obeying the orders of the agents of the *Times*, were so doing with the authority and knowledge of the Government.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I say distinctly no, Sir. If the right hon. Gentleman will read the answer I have given to-morrow morning he will see that I distinctly negatived any suggestion of the kind.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will there be any difficulty in giving us a Return of the number of Irish police constables and officers who have been in London at the service of the *Times* since the Commission began, and how many days they have remained in London? I observed to-day in Court a sub-inspector who was examined two months ago, and who, I am told, has been here ever since.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware that anyone has been in attendance in London in the service of the *Times*. Any persons here in that capacity, so far as we know, are here on the subpœna of the Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then I ask whether it was on a subpœna of the Court that Preston visited Tracy in Millbank Prison?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware of what visits are made to the prisons. My right hon. Friend has explained the circumstances. Visits are not made on subpœnas. I have no other information,

and I can give him no opinion on the subject.

MR. H. P. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the courtyard in front of Mr. Soames's office in Lincoln's Inn Fields has been crowded for weeks with constables from Ireland, many of whom were lolling about and smoking cigars?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir. I am not aware of the fact.

MR. COBB: It is a fact.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I will on Monday put down a Motion for a Return of the number of constables deported from Ireland and placed at the service of the *Times*; and also ask how long they have been allowed to remain in London?

MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Was not Sergeant Fawcett examined weeks ago when he was brought from his duties in Cork, and have not he and a number of other constables boasted of the large expenses allowed by the *Times*?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir. I have no information.

THE ARAB SLAVE TRADERS.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any truth in the report which has appeared in the newspapers that Commander Cameron will go out to Africa with something like a Charter from the British Government which will authorize him to carry on what would really be a war against the organized bands of Arab Slave traders in the interior?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: There is no truth in this report.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. CAREW.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary whether Mr. Carew, M.P., has been removed to a boarded cell and put upon hospital diet; whether, if so, that has been done at the instance of the prison doctor; and whether Mr. Carew's clothes, taken from him on the 21st ult., have yet been restored to him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The detailed report is: "Matting laid down in cell; and provided with hospital mattress and palliasse." He has, I know, on medical grounds, been permitted to wear flannel drawers, shirt, and socks.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.—ENCROACHMENTS ON PUBLIC ROADS.

MR. F. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire whether it is the fact that, in spite of the unanimous opposition of the Vestry of St. Marylebone, the Metropolitan Board of Works has granted permission to the Samaritan Free Hospital to advance their frontage 12 feet on the Marylebone Road; and, whether, if this is so, in view of the importance of preserving all open spaces in the Metropolis, and of the danger of one encroachment forming a precedent for others, the Board will postpone action in the matter until the subject can be dealt with by the London County Council?

MR. ALAN DE TATTON EGERTON: The Board decided to-day to take no further action in the matter.

MR. SEAGER HUNT: Was the determination of the Board arrived at after full consideration of the remarks made by the deputation?

The Question was not answered.

THE ESTIMATES.

MR. J. E. ELLIS asked the First Lord of the Treasury how soon after the voting of the Address will the Estimates be introduced; and whether it is proposed to put down effective Supply on particular nights thenceforward?

MR. W. H. SMITH: All the time placed by the House at the disposal of the Government will be utilized to proceed with financial business which it is necessary to complete before the close of the financial year, so soon as the Address is voted.

BOROUGH AND IMPROVEMENT BILLS.

MR. W. A. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to move the reference of the various Borough and Improvement Bills to a Special Committee, similar to those appointed in recent years, in order to secure uniformity in police, sanitary, &c., municipal law?

MR. W. H. SMITH: If the hon. and learned Member will refer to the Votes and Proceedings of this House for the 26th ult., he will find that a Motion was then made for the appointment of a

Committee to consider Police and Sanitary Regulations.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. J. T. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I wish to ask, Sir, whether it is a fact that the libels contained in "Parnellism and Crime" are still being sold at Messrs. Smith and Son's bookstalls at railway stations?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I appeal to you, Sir, and to the House, whether, whatever differences of opinion exist, it is right that such a Question should be asked of me?

THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS—PERSONAL EXPLANATION—MR. MORLEY.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle): I desire, Sir, by the indulgence of the House, to correct something which I said in the course of my remarks on Monday last. I was referring to occurrences in Killarney, and which related to something affecting Col. Turner. I have this morning received a letter from Col. Turner, which I hope I shall be allowed to read. It is as follows:—

"Dear Mr. MORLEY,—You are reported as having said in the House of Commons last night that I, from a garret window, ordered the police to charge, and that four policemen, armed, did charge in a most unmerciful manner, using their rifles as clubs. As it is absolutely without foundation that I ever gave such an order, directly or indirectly, you will, I have no doubt, see the propriety of correcting your statement."

Of course, I accept Col. Turner's statement, and I regret that I was misled.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): With reference to the letter which has just been read, I wish to ask whether, as every word stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle can be proved, and as Col. Turner did give the order referred to, the Government will grant a sworn inquiry into the circumstances of the case?

The Question was unanswered.

MOTIONS.

PHARMACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir Henry Roscoe, Bill to amend "The Pharmacy Act, 1852," "The Pharmacy Act (1868)," and the "Pharmacy Act (1868) Amendment Act, 1869," ordered to be brought in by Sir Henry Roscoe, Dr. Farquharson, Sir Tindal Robertson, Mr. Craig, Sir Trevor Lawrence, and Sir Guyer Hunter.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 143.]

SHOPS (WEEKLY HALF-HOLIDAY) BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to enable Local Authorities to establish a Weekly Half-Holiday for Shops, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Barry, Mr. Burt, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Walter Foster, and Mr. Whitley.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 144.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [21st February]—[See page 41.]

And which Amendment was,

In paragraph 8, line 4, to leave out all the words after the word "Country," to the end of the paragraph, in order to insert the words,—"But we humbly represent to Your Majesty that the present system of administration in Ireland is harsh, oppressive, and unjust, that it violates the rights and alienates the affections of Your Majesty's Irish Subjects, and is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain:

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that such measures of conciliation should be adopted as may bring about the contentment of the Irish people, and establish a real union between Great Britain and Ireland,"—(*Mr. John Morley*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, C.): Mr. Speaker, I had not quite con-

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): My first duty, Sir, is to thank the hon. and learned Member for Longford for his great courtesy in according me an opportunity of addressing the House at this time which I should not otherwise have enjoyed, and now, Sir, I observe, in the first place, there are three main issues raised for discussion by the Amendment which has been moved by my right hon. Friend. The first of them is this—that he called upon us entirely to disclaim, and as strongly as possible, the present system of administration in Ireland. The second is that he asserts this system of admini-

stration to be viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain. The third is that we are asked to represent to Her Majesty that measures of conciliation should be adopted, meaning, I believe, measures of conciliation in the administration of the country, but undoubtedly also measures of legislative conciliation. With regard to the measures of legislative conciliation upon which I propose to touch in the first instance, I feel, for my own part, that perhaps we seem to owe some apology to the people of Ireland for having allowed the great questions connected with the domestic government of that country to remain unnoticed, or without, at any rate, any definitive notice in Parliament during the whole of the existence of the present House of Commons. The reasons of this reticence and abstention I take to have been these—in the first place a remarkable self-denial on the part of those who are known as Nationalist Members representing Ireland; and in the second place a very great desire on the part of those who are representatives of the British people to make progress in British legislation; and in the third place I cannot omit to state, as that without which the previous motives might perhaps have been insufficient, that we are tolerably well satisfied with the progress which, without Motions in this House, the question has made in the opinions and favour of the country. But now, Sir, we have been told in a speech of considerable authority that my right hon. Friend has been altogether wrong in assailing the administration of the Government in Ireland, and that our duty was to have propounded the legislative measures which we deem necessary for the welfare of the country, including, of course, in the first place the measure we should desire to see adopted for the purpose of giving to that country control of its own domestic affairs. This is the claim of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. I shall endeavour to examine the validity and equity of that claim, but I wish to point out that if we had taken that course, undoubtedly the effect must have been to draw attention away from the very facts we wish to bring into prominent notice in connection with the present Government of Ireland; and, likewise, it must have been to afford the broadest grounds for an immediate appeal to the majority, to this effect—"You are simply discussing the question of Home Rule in Ireland, which you were sent to this Parliament to oppose." But, Sir, the Amendment moved by my right hon. Friend, in referring to measures of legislation, proceeds upon the basis that measures of legislation were, at the General Election, countenanced and promised, not only by us, but by those who are now the Government, and by those who are now the most effective supporters of the Goverment. Why have not they brought forward these measures? Our contention was that all those promises which were given would vanish into thin air, and that contention has been miserably fulfilled, in no case more conspicuously than in that of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. The counter contention which carried the country and incapacitated us from the direction of affairs—the counter contention was that those who opposed the grant of Home Rule as a thing dangerous to the supremacy of the Empire were prepared for the extension of local liberties in Ireland, and for that extension in such terms and to such an extent as did undoubtedly raise very seriously for our consideration whether, when such measures were proposed, though they might fall short of what we believed to be requisite, yet we ought not thankfully to accept them as an instalment, at any rate, of justice, and as fraught with partial advantage to the Irish people. That, Sir, is the object of the Amendment of my right hon. Friend, and that is the question which has been, I will not say evaded—it is not evaded—but treated in a peculiar manner, by my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham. Now, Sir, what said he upon this subject? Our Amendment is an invitation for the production of those measures which were postponed from 1886 to 1887, which were postponed from 1887 to 1888, which were postponed from 1888 to 1889, and which, according to the Speech from the Throne, are now again postponed from 1889 to 1890. Well, Sir, some of the more courageous among that band to which my right hon. Friend belongs occasionally wind up their courage to so high a point that they say that measures of Local Govern-

ment and privilege for Ireland ought not to be indefinitely postponed. My hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees the other night, being in a valiant mood, he, too, I think, declared that those measures should not be indefinitely postponed. Let me do justice to the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, who said they ought not to be postponed at all, but that they ought to have accompanied the harsh and severe legislation against Ireland you have introduced. But, passing from that just tribute to the noble Lord, let me ask what is the meaning of "indefinitely postponed"? Evidently it is a phrase of considerable elasticity. It has already done such good service that it has postponed to the year 1890 everything in the nature of privilege to Ireland, everything in the direction of self-government. Well, Sir, it is not for me to interpret that phrase, but I am shrewdly inclined to suspect that the meaning of it is that this Parliament has nothing to do with such measures, but that in a future Parliament possibly those gentlemen who term themselves Liberal Unionists may be inclined seriously to consider them. Well, Sir, the present votes of that portion of the House of Commons are matters of extreme interest and importance. We have looked for them with the utmost anxiety; we admit the vast effect that they have produced; we recognize the fact that they are the true pillars, the only effectual mainstay of the present policy; and, therefore, recognizing their power, we pay them the compliment which is their due. But that is with regard to the importance of the votes that they give and the influence which they exercise in the present Parliament. With regard to their votes in the next Parliament—I do not speak of anyone in particular, and least of all do I speak of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham; but speaking of that body of 70 Gentlemen who now convert the Tory minority into a large majority of the House, and secure the charter of that Government—with respect to that body of Gentlemen, I must own that, whether it be owing to the obtusity of my perceptions or not, I regard the manner in which they will vote in the next Parliament as a question of the smallest possible importance. I come to the argument of my right hon. Friend, who faced this question about the promises of legislation that have been made, and gave the reason which, in his judgment, had set aside the force of those promises, and his reason was this—that the agitation in Ireland had been resolved upon with a view of making the government of Ireland impossible. With regard to making the government of Ireland impossible, we are told that the government of Ireland has been splendidly and remarkably successful, and there appears to the ordinary understanding to be some difficulty in reconciling those contending phrases. The meaning, however, I take to be, when we part from rhetorical phrases, that there was an intention to place difficulties in the way, and to raise excitement in Ireland, which would render the task of governing that country more arduous than it need otherwise have been. Now, what have those difficulties been? I admit that there have been difficulties placed in the way; I do not doubt it for a moment; but what have those difficulties been? Difficulties in connection with the question of Irish land. And who has placed those difficulties in the way? No one more than my right hon. Friend. Let my assertion be tested as I am endeavouring to test his. In 1886 the Parliament met under the auspices of the present Government. The land difficulty in Ireland was then fully before us. A large number of rents were known to be impossible to pay, and in order to meet that difficulty every suggestion was made on this side of the House. The Government were implored by so humble a person as myself to take the very moderate measure—I might say the almost insignificantly small measure—of introducing a Bill to give time for the payment of those rents until the inquiries of the Commission should be concluded. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork went boldly to the front and to the root of the evil, and proposed a Bill for the very purpose of removing this great land difficulty and meeting the case of vast numbers of tenants known and admitted to be unable to pay their actual rents. What was the course taken by the Government? What was the course taken by my noble Friend who has just entered (Lord Hartington), and by my right hon. Friend beside him (Mr. Chamberlain). It was this—

to refuse to take any measure whatever, and to oppose and throw out on the second reading the Bill proposed by the hon. Member for Cork. They, therefore, were the creators of the land difficulty, and if the government of Ireland has been rendered impossible, it was by their action that that impossibility was created. So much for the temporary difficulty arising out of the crisis of 1886. But then there was the Land Question. Who is it that has neglected the Land Question? Were impediments placed in the way of the Government in that great undertaking? On the contrary, I am in the recollection of the House when I state my clear remembrance that at the commencement of the Session of 1888 the hon. Member for Cork spoke to this effect—

"You are in the habit of saying that the Irish Question is the Land Question; that there is no national question of serious moment apart from the Land Question. Then settle the Land Question, and test your own doctrine and your own declarations, and when the Land Question is settled, then the national question will dwindle into insignificance."

Every effort was used to induce the Government to settle that question. They made no effort whatever, and it is under those circumstances and when the difficulty of the present distress was met by an actual proposal from the Irish Members and when the whole of this side of the House, the whole at least of the Liberal Members on this side, urged the Government to settle the Land Question, when the Government themselves have done nothing except what is admitted does not settle the Land Question, and when they have taken no measure to effect that settlement, and when they have actually refused to entertain proposals to deal with the distress of 1886, then it is that my right hon. Friend thinks it equitable, rational, and just to charge upon the Irish Members that they, forsooth, have created the difficulty of governing Ireland. No, Sir; it was created by those who, when the facts of the distress of 1886 were patent and clear, obstinately refused to deal with them. Of course that refusal was followed by the Plan of Campaign. Yes, of course; the Plan of Campaign was the direct and necessary offspring. I have never vindicated it, or vindicated breach of the law in any shape or form whatever, but I have said this, and will say it again, that there are many cases in which the law-makers are far more responsible and far more guilty than the law-breakers, and this is one of them. From the evidence I possess, more good than evil, more peace than disturbance, and greatly more, have followed from the Plan of Campaign. But, whether that be correct or not, if the Plan of Campaign has been the unmixed mischief which you describe it to have been, it is the majority of this House, and especially it is those on this side of the House who make up that majority, that are responsible for that Plan, because, when the facts were patent and the proposal was pressed upon them, they obstinately refused either to legislate themselves or to allow others to legislate. And what does my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham do now? He says, in very conciliatory tones, that he is most anxious for the settlement of the Land Question. Well, Sir, when I heard my right hon. Friend say that, I anticipated with the utmost confidence what his next sentence must necessarily be, that it could only be a fervid appeal to Her Majesty's Government—to point out the splendid position in which they stand; to point out that they have a majority in this House which still is a large majority: that they have a minority in the House most anxious to promote the settlement of the Land Question; and therefore I considered that my right hon. Friend must necessarily in his next sentence apply to those who in the first place possess the indispensable condition of official information, and who, in the next place, possess the indescribable pleasure of the confidence of my right hon. Friend. My astonishment rose, I must say, to the very highest point when my right hon. Friend turned pointedly to me, and exhorted me, forsooth! representing what he often calls a discomfited and discredited minority; me, forsooth! divested of all opportunities of information which are absolutely necessary for a settlement of the Land Question; me, forsooth! to make this effort. I began to think—Am I, then, the person who is so happy as to possess the political confidence of my right hon. Friend? I think, Sir, I have shown that the responsibility for the land difficulties in Ireland, and the agitation

connected with them, does not lie with the men who made the first, and the most strenuous, and the most eager efforts to dispose of that difficulty in 1886 when it might have been averted; that the responsibility of an unsettled Land Question necessarily lies with the majority of this House, especially in the case where that majority would have had the willing assistance of the minority to attain its object. Well, Sir, but pray recollect that this interposition of the difficulty in Ireland, this making the government of Ireland impossible, is the whole and the sole plea under cover of which my right hon. Friend and those who act with him have retreated from every pledge that they have made. This is their plea, the shallow plea, the paltry plea, the untrue plea, the plea which is the direct reverse of the fact that the difficulties of the Government in Ireland have been created by a majority, and the efforts of the minority to meet the case have been defeated by the majority. These are the circumstances under which all those brilliant and copious promises have been dispersed and dissipated. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Chamberlain), who is himself, I think, the most prolific parent of one scheme after another, has around him the greatest multitude of these shattered and ruined promises, all of which, perhaps, some day he will have picked off from the ground and cast into his waste paper basket. When I think of that case, of the engagements undertaken in regard to Ireland in 1886 in order to get rid of the Home Rule policy and the Hôme Rule Ministry, and of the manner in which those engagements have been disregarded and trampled wantonly under foot, I recollect that there is a place which is said to be paved with good intentions. It occurs to my mind that if at any time, in repairing the pavement of that place, a deficiency in the supply of these good intentions should be felt, they can fill the place and make up the deficiency with broken Irish promises, of which the supply will be inexhaustible, and of which the material will do just as well. Now, this Amendment is an invitation to the majority of this House to produce their legislation. It is an implied pledge that this legislation if produced, though we may think it insufficient, will have our fair and candid consideration. But it is also an invitation which, if disregarded, will tend still further to expose in the eyes of the country the utter hollowness and the utter shallowness of the pretexts which have been set up, and the real determination of those who constitute the present majority—on whichever side of the House they sit—to do nothing in redemption of the pledges which have been made by the majority, and the pledges which gave to them the control of the destinies of Ireland. Now I must take a brief notice—and it shall only be a brief notice—of the second point raised in the Resolution. That is to say, we assume the responsibility of declaring, and of inviting the House to declare, that this policy which now prevails is viewed with reprobation and aversion by the people of Great Britain. My right hon. Friend contested this proposition, and gave us his own opinion of the views of the people of Great Britain, tested, as he said, by the moderate diminution which has taken place in the numbers of the majority now ruling the House since the General Election. That majority, which stood originally, I believe by confession, at 117, now stands at 93; and my right hon. Friend considers that so satisfactory a state of things that he says he is not aware of any occasion on which a Government—I think he said a Government, but I am not sure whether he did not mean a Government with which he has been connected—has suffered so little in the period—namely, two-and-a-half years. Well, Sir, I differ entirely from my right hon. Friend. I think that that is a serious diminution in the majority. But the importance or the non-importance of that diminution is not tested by the figures themselves. Ninety-three is a very large majority. It may prove to be perfectly adequate to sustain the fortunes of the Government for a considerable time yet to come. But my right hon. Friend says that the by-elections, as they are called, afford no real or substantial key to the opinions of the country. What can these by-elections mean? How far have they gone? This I believe to be entirely indisputable. Since the end of August, 1886, 60 constituencies have pronounced their judgment upon the policy of Her Majesty's Government, either once or more than once. In cases where

they have pronounced more than once, such as Burnley, the seat which was won against a Liberal in 1886, was won by a Liberal within the last few days. But I entreat the House to listen to what is a very simple and, I believe, a perfectly clear and undeniable statement. I, in this statement, divide the House entirely as Home Rulers and anti-Home Rulers, as being clearly the most convenient method of distinction. In 1886 these 60 constituencies returned 23 Home Rulers and 37 anti-Home Rulers. These 60 constituencies now return 30 of each. My right hon. Friend says that this is a very insignificant change. The proportion of 37 to 23, according to the arithmetic of my right hon. Friend, differs only immaterially from the proportion of 30 to 30. But the fact which the House ought to observe is this—that the choice of these constituencies depends, in some degree, upon the impartiality of pale death, who knocks with equal foot at the door of the cottage and upon the fortresses of kings; but it depends also, in some degree, upon the choice of Government. This choice has, no doubt, under the direction and advice of the highly esteemed Gentleman who directs that department of the affairs of the Government, been judiciously made; but I want to point out by indisputable facts that these 60 constituencies form a sample of the House of Commons not insufficient in quantity and in quality, most unduly favourable to Her Majesty's Government. They are not insufficient in quantity, because the amount is one-eleventh part of the entire constituencies of the country. But in quality, how stand they? They returned, being an eleventh part of the constituency, in 1886 a majority of 14 for the Government. Had the whole country been of the same complexion it would have returned a majority, on 11 times the number of constituencies, 11 times as large—that is to say, that the majority of 117 would, if these constituencies had been a fair sample of the whole, have been 154. I do not think hon. Gentlemen opposite will pick a hole in that arithmetic; and if they would like one other indication I will give them it. What was the representation of these constituencies in 1885? In those happy days we Liberals were all of one mind; and I am going to put with the Liberals, for the purposes of this computation, the Irish Nationalists of that day, who, unhappily, were not altogether at the moment ef the election in the same way as ourselves. They had been offered such inducements, such marks of confidence, from hon. Gentlemen opposite, and especially from their most distinguished Leaders, that they were for a moment seduced by these favours, which are not, I think, very likely to be at present or for a very long time renewed. Well, here is a singular fact, and I speak of these constituencies and of no other. What did these constituencies do in 1885? After the General Election of 1885 there were 250 Tories in the House, and there were 420 Gentlemen who were not Tories; and yet these 60 constituencies returned in 1885 33 Tories, whereas of Liberals, Dissentient Liberals, and Home Rulers they returned only 27. I think I have made good my statement that, if it be true that these by-elections are a very imperfect indication of the sense of the country, the reason of their being imperfect in these 60 constituencies is that they would, if taken alone, have returned a most striking answer, yet not one nearly so striking or nearly so condemnatory of the Irish policy of the present Government, as the whole country would, if it had the opportunity of doing it. Well, now, we are told of a great improvement in Ireland, and we all, in our own way, rejoice in that improvement. I must own myself rather surprised when I find that the increase of agricultural values is coolly set down to the credit of Her Majesty's Government. Undoubtedly in 1886, when there was a tremendous depression of those values, I am not aware that anyone set down the depression to the discredit of the Tory Government. I push lightly aside the preposterous pretensions that are now founded on this increase in agricultural values, including railway traffic, which of course in Ireland depends mainly upon agriculture. Doubtless there is another improvement in Ireland of which we may well congratulate ourselves—an improvement with regard to crime. But as to that crime I shall have presently to draw a distinction. There is unquestionably an improvement, and a great improvement, with regard to the sub-

stantial crime, with regard to the atrocious crime, and with regard to the crime generally menacing to society. You say it is consequence of Coercion. Of that we shall have more to say by and by, but I wish now to express my firm conviction that it is directly the reverse. It is a consequence of the efforts made by those in whom the Irish people have confidence that they have abstained from crime; it is a consequence of the hope and confidence definitely and confidently reposed—perhaps for the first time—in the people of Great Britain. This is a matter which remains for argument, and I shall endeavour by-and-bye to throw further light upon it. In the meantime I want to say that here, as upon all occasions, we suffer, and suffer most seriously, from the apparent reluctance of the Government to supply us, and above all to supply us in time, with information exhibiting the real state of things in Ireland. Crime shows, apparently, a large diminution. I deduct threatening letters, because it is better to do so for the purpose of getting at the heart of the case, and then I find that in 1886 there were 512 reported agrarian crimes in Ireland; in 1887 there were 469; and in 1888 there were 386. Now arises the question what has this so-called Crimes Act, an Act called the Crimes Act because it really had nothing to do with crime—what has the so-called Crimes Act to do with this decrease of crime? Looking over the reports of these agrarian charges, you will find there are 20 columns of reports, and there are but three of these columns that are in the slightest degree within the purview of the so-called Crimes Act. It has nothing to do judicially and legally with crime except in a few particulars. What are those particulars? As far as I can make out, there are only three categories of agrarian crime upon which the Crimes Act can be brought to bear. These are intimidation, riot, and forcible possession. The crimes of these descriptions numbered 122 in 1886 and 69 in 1888. I want to know what has become of all those crimes which have been shifted out of the higher Courts under the machinery of the Crimes Act, and which are now dealt with under that Act as matters of summary jurisdiction? Can the Government give me this assurance—that every case of intimidation, every case of riot, and every case of forcible possession which is included in the Returns under the Crimes Act is also included in the Agrarian Returns? If they cannot, it is evident that we are open to this danger—that a multitude of cases which would have appeared, and which ordinarily do appear, in Agrarian Returns, have been removed from our notice, our privity, and our investigation by being disposed of by way of summary jurisdiction before the Resident Magistrates. We heard yesterday from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) that there were in 1888 137 convictions for intimidation, 164 for riot, and 50 for forcible possession, making in all 351. But the whole Return of agrarian offences under these three heads was in 1886 only 122. We are aware that the number of cases reported will probably be smaller than the number of convictions named to us by the right hon. Gentleman, because more than one person may have been engaged in a number of cases, but, *primâ facie* and until the matter is explained, we have no evidence at all in these Returns of any decrease in crime in regard to crimes with which the Crimes Act deals. The decrease is in crime outside the Crimes Act; and apparently, as far as the evidence goes, in those descriptions which are touched by the Crimes Act—intimidation, riot, and forcible possession—there has not been a decrease, but there has probably been even an increase of crime. Be that as it may, the satisfaction with which we admit a decrease of the more serious crime is an unqualified satisfaction, and we adhere with firmness to our belief as to what is the cause of it. It is said by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) that this aspect of the case is altogether too thin and too small—that the field opened up by the Amendment is too narrow. Is that really the case? What do we challenge? We challenge, on the part of the Government, the total abandonment, and, virtually, the total prohibition of all attempts at measures on behalf of the local liberties of Ireland. We challenge the Coercion Act, as well as the administration of that Act. We challenge it upon the old grounds, confirmed, strengthened, and enlarged

by what is daily taking place. We challenge it as condemned by the people; we challenge it as introduced for the first time in defiance of the Irish protest that there was not what may be called a surfeit of agrarian crime. There is no instance on record of the introduction of such a measure in defiance of Irish protest, at any period known to me in our history, without a surfeit of agrarian crime; and small as is my faith, derived from experience, in the coercive system, I recognize the broad and vital distinction which would be established by the presence or absence of such a state of things. And, further, we challenge this Act as being in this respect entirely a new-fangled Act aimed not at crime at all, but aimed at combination—at combination which is the only weapon in the hands of the poor for adjusting their grievances, at combination which is expressly protected and sanctioned by the law of England, Scotland, and Wales. That is a broad challenge. We challenge, perhaps most of all, the doctrine laid down by the Government and frankly avowed by the Irish Secretary, but which is avowed by none of those near me, that Ireland is best governed by Coercion—of course, I do not mean for all time or for all eternity—but that Ireland is best governed by Coercion now. I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman himself cherishes a hope that there will be some period between this time and the Day of Judgment when the Coercion Act may be repealed; but for actual Ireland, Ireland as she is, he frankly avows that Coercion is the proper mode of government. And his distinct avowal is not to be cancelled by a shake of the head. He told us that Local Government is an excellent thing when people are prepared for it; and the withholding of Local Government I call Coercion. This I call part of the system of Coercion—not the most direct and vital part, but a serious and important part of it. We are told in the Queen's Speech that coercive measures have improved the condition of Ireland, and therefore Ireland is to be governed by them. These are the propositions which we challenge, and I think they are broad enough, if not for the capacious minds of the Dissentient Liberals, at any rate for the limited faculties of ordinary mortals such as the discomfited and discredited Party who now occupy these benches. We are told in bland and soothing tones that perhaps we have got a case for inquiry. I have here a report of a speech made by my hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney) so long ago as October, 1887. He, as an upright man, was shocked at the facts disclosed about Mitchelstown, but he took no heed of the circumstance that everything that had been done by the authorities at Mitchelstown was defended and glorified in by the Government. He took no heed of that, as he takes no heed now of the language of the Government in regard to all their worst acts which we charged upon the Administration in Ireland. But still he was shocked at the facts, and said there ought to be inquiry. He said—"There must be inquiry, and I may go a little further, and promise you that there shall be inquiry." That was the promise of my hon. Friend; and he is a man of his word; there is no more sincere and upright man; but the most sincere, upright, and courageous man cannot for a moment contend against the limitations and fetters of the position he has chosen for himself. What is the use of saying that there ought to be inquiry, of saying that there must be inquiry, and of saying that there shall be inquiry, when you know that so often as the Tory Government choose to say, "It is a question of our holding office to maintain the Union, or of letting in others to relax the Union," as they call it, there is no choice? I am very glad my hon. Friend shakes his head and so does my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. But I must ask my hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees, who is so admirably placed, and has such great influence from his character for impartiality, why, having promised his constituents that inquiry there should be, he did not move for such inquiry?

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I certainly made the declaration quoted by my right hon. Friend, and I made it with the fullest confidence that he would move for such inquiry. It appeared to me at the time and it appears to me still that that would be the logical and Parliamentary consequence of the action he has taken. If he or anyone sitting beside him had made that Motion

I should have voted for it; and if any right hon. Gentleman opposite had resisted it by saying it was a question of the Union, I should have laughed in his face.

MR. GLADSTONE: My right hon. Friend, it appears, makes a promise on my behalf. He says he made this statement in the belief that I would bring forward such a Motion, and, believing that I would do it, he entered into this promise with his constituents. My right hon. Friend is an able, a prudent, and experienced man, and he had no doubt of our action. But you will observe on this and questions such as these that when a question arises as to which these Gentlemen are deeply committed, some question upon which they have pledged themselves to their constituents in the open face of day—then, when they know that their vote against the Government on that subject will be totally insignificant and be harmless to Her Majesty's Government, they come forward with great independence and record their votes, just as in former days an occasional Tory used to vote for the ballot when he knew there was a preponderating majority against it. This is a very ancient form of Parliamentary strategy which really requires no further consideration. This observation applies to my right hon. Friend on my right hand, and on my left the Member for West Birmingham. The plain meaning of it is this—with all his projects, plans, and schemes—some compute that he has launched some five-and-twenty of them—but in matter of figures I seek to be careful; and, believing there may be some exaggeration, I will not say even if he has turned the score—but whatever the number, it does not signify a rush—1, 2, 3 plan—A, B, C, D, all the alphabet down to Z—down they must all go, the moment Her Majesty's Government gives the order that the Union is endangered. My hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees says that I ought to have moved for this inquiry. Now in these matters I think I am a little more cautious, even a little more Parliamentary, than my hon. Friend supposes. Before I move for a Committee of Inquiry, I want to be assured of my ground for so doing. I am not willing to proceed on newspaper reports alone, and in the Mitchelstown case, and in almost every other case, we have asked, begged, entreated, and besought the Government to give us officially the facts, but without result. [Several hon. MEMBERS: Dopping.] Being unable to get the facts and thus make this preliminary step, no doubt I have abstained from bringing a Motion forward for a Committee of Inquiry. What is such a Motion? My hon. Friend talks as if it were an easy matter. What would have happened? In the first place there was no evening on which such a thing could be done; and secondly, if, as necessary for the purpose, a day were asked for, could I go from Mitchelstown and Killeagh to Kinsella—from one case to another, asking for a Committee for each? What would have been said? It would have been said: Here is patent palpable obstruction. Now, with regard to this point, I desire to make one observation. During the Session of 1888 we rendered to the Government the most important services it was in our power to render in the prosecution of public business, but whenever I read the speeches of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, I found that they were either silent as to the assistance we rendered or actually charged us with obstruction. What would have happened had I brought forward such a Motion as my hon. Friend suggests? There would have been vehement charges against us of obstruction. Nobody but partizans and bigots believe them for a moment; but they confuse the issue, and draw off the mind of the people from the grand question before us—namely, the question of the fortunes and the fate of Ireland. Our object is to have this issue clear, and therefore I will not, unnecessarily, expose myself to such charges. But, Sir, most of these cases have been cases of prison treatment; that has been the great subject—the greatest, I think—of discussion, anxiety, and misgiving in this House. What has happened in respect to prison treatment? When the Coercion Bill was under discussion in Committee, notice was given on this side of the House of a new clause, which would have provided that all persons convicted under the Act should be treated as first-class misdemeanants, and so disposed of this whole matter. What became of that clause? It was closured out. And what has happened

since, whenever complaint has been made of the prison treatment of any prisoner? Her Majesty's Government have not only refused inquiry, but have adopted the thing complained of. It is now too late to grant any Parliamentary inquiry. That would have been very well while judgment was not foreclosed. The heaviest matter of accusation has been adopted by Her Majesty's Government as matter of praise and commendation. Yes; the time for inquiry has gone by; the issue is fairly joined, and we ask the verdict of the country upon it. Now, I own I heard with some pain the remarks of my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham upon prison treatment. He, too, adopted the course not only of minimizing the complaints that have been made, but of indulging in something very near jeering at these cases of prison discipline, matters of cutting hair, refusal to be weighed, and the like. Well, this business of cutting the hair would have been of smaller importance, perhaps, fifty years ago; but if the business of involuntary hair cutting is to be applied impartially in all cases, I do not know what section may escape disagreeable consequences. In my opinion, to enforce compliance in these cases is, in the first place, totally against the spirit of the prison rule. The prison rule recognizes the necessity of cutting the hair for purposes of health and cleanliness. In these cases nobody pretends that the cutting of the hair or the prison dress are necessary in the interest of health and cleanliness; and if the practice is not necessary for such purposes it becomes a personal indignity, and ought not to be inflicted on Members of Parliament or Irish priests, or anybody else, and when it has been inflicted it ought not to be made light of by men in our station. Now, I put these charges together. I am not going to be entangled in arguments as to what are and are not political offences. I know very well you cannot attempt to frame a legislative definition of political offences; but what you can do, and what always has been done, is this—you can say that in certain classes of cases the imprisoned person ought not to be treated as if he had been guilty of base and degrading crime. What does the ordinary sentence of imprisonment import? The deprivation of literature and visitors—well, I am not quite sure whether it is not better to have visitors shut out than to have them sent in at the instance of somebody else for the convenience of somebody in a legal action—the plank bed, the prison dress, the odious, the disgraceful incident of the company of felons; there is the business of cleansing the cell, the clipping of the hair, and there is—and I refer to it as it has happened—the production of a prisoner in prison dress to give evidence in open Court, actually in sight of his constituents; within the precincts where he has obtained the confidence of the people, he is made to appear in a position of degradation. There is no need for any inquiry in cases such as these. They are adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and his Colleagues—and in their view they constitute the true and best permanent method of dealing with Ireland. Right hon. Gentlemen must know well that changes such as these violently imported into manners, habits, and conditions of life of hon. Members and others, must expose them in many cases; but the off-handed answer is that there is a prison doctor who will look after them. I do not enter into the facts of the statement made by the hon. Member for East Mayo as to the very different treatment in certain cases of prisoners who have been convicted of degrading crime, because the facts are disputed; and, consequently, I shall await elucidation, which, I take it, will be granted. But, Sir, I say that though sensitiveness to indignities of this kind may be a matter on which men will differ according to their temperament and their ideas, yet such sensitiveness is a sensitiveness rather to be encouraged than to be repressed, for it appertains to that lofty sentiment—that spirit which was described by Burke in immortal language when he said, "The spirit which feels a stain like a wound." Now, Sir, what are the merits of this case? Have we before us a Conservative Government or not? I know there is a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer. We cannot expect from him—he has been reared in such a bad school—much regard for precedent. But I take it for granted that the bulk of the Gentlemen opposite are bound to have regard for precedent. We condemn this prison treatment in the mass, and not because one man was not

weighed and one man had his hair cut. We condemn it in the lump and in the gross, and as it is defended, vindicated, and justified, we decline to potter about Parliamentary inquiries, and we want to carry the issue to the country. Now, as for precedents, has there been a feeling on the part of different Governments in good times, aye, even in bad times, that offenders of the class and under the conditions I have described ought to be treated with leniency, consideration, forbearance, and indulgence? Yes, there has. I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to confute it. Let him confute the statement that Liberal and Conservative Governments have, until the present pseudo-Conservative one, endorsed these principles, and apply them first as to a Liberal Government. When the treatment of Mr. Harrington was discovered by Lord Spencer, he at once applied a remedy, although the Chief Secretary for Ireland has never yet had the grace or decency to make Lord Spencer an apology for what he has said upon the subject. He offered something instead of the apology, and said that he did not know and could not know; then, if he did not and could not know, why did he make a positive statement upon the subject? The right hon. Gentleman has no answer to make to that; he does not spring to his feet so lightly as my right hon. Friend near me. "His bosom's lord sits"—generally—"lightly on its throne!"—possibly not on every occasion. We protest against this prison treatment as being condemned by the country, and as being in itself unwise, inhuman, and brutal. I have not sought to multiply epithets of this kind, but I cannot altogether withhold them. Finally, I say, it is entirely contrary to the usage of other Governments. Now, I challenge the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon that question. What has been the usage of other Governments in this important respect? An hon. and learned Friend of mine, who sits behind me, adverted to this subject in a letter to the *Times* some time ago—a valuable letter—and I gave some attention to it. Take the case of Mr. Cobbett. He was in prison for a very serious offence in a most serious time—namely, in the most agonizing time of a great war. But he was treated with the utmost indulgence in prison, of which I could, if required, give the House some detail. Sir John Hobhouse was sent to prison, and he likewise was treated—both these by Tory Governments—with the utmost indulgence. Mr. Feargus O'Connor was sent to prison, and Lord Normanby, under a Liberal Government, wrote that nothing ought to be done—I forget the words, but this is the substance of them—which was harsh in itself, or which was injurious to his feelings. Mr. Smith O'Brien was imprisoned, and he was treated exactly on the same principle. Mitchel, after his condemnation, upon his voyage across the Atlantic, was treated with the utmost and peculiar leniency. But there was one case above all—a case in which I myself may not have been free from responsibility—but of course of a secondary kind, and that was the case of Mr. O'Connell. You say sometimes that the ringleaders are the men who ought to be severely punished; and you say, "Do not punish severely the unhappy victims whom they delude and mislead." And on that principle you attempt to justify what you are doing in defiance of all usage and precedent. Was O'Connell a ringleader or not? As Saul slew his thousands and David his tens of thousands, if Mr. W. O'Brien has addressed his thousands Mr. O'Connell addressed his hundreds of thousands. Was the offence of Mr. O'Connell in law a serious offence—an offence of the gravest character? He was condemned, I think, to one year's imprisonment or to pay a fine of £2,000. I am not quite sure whether it was the converse of that, but I think I am right, and to very heavy pecuniary recognizances for seven years, the imprisonment to be prolonged until those recognizances, which, I think, were for £10,000, were complied with. What was the condition of O'Connell in prison under those grave circumstances and for this grave offence? I will not read the whole details published by Sir Charles Gavan Duffy; but he says—

"When O'Connell arrived at Richmond Bridewell, the governor and deputy-governor were authorized to sublet their houses and gardens to the State prisoners. Members of Mr. O'Connell's family and of the families of the other prisoners came to reside with them. They employed their own servants from the first day. Presents of venison, game, fish, fruit, and the like flowed in upon them."

There is the statement that these

men, under the Tory Goverment of Sir Robert Peel, enjoyed comfort and even luxury, such was the determination of the Tories in those days not to inflict upon them any indignities. Now we have a Government who, reversing all precedent as they despise all propriety, inflict upon these men, for offences which they have themselves created, and which they know are not esteemed to be offences at all by many persons in this House and by millions of people out of this House—they completely reverse and subvert ancient rules of action, and make themselves as responsible for these proceedings as if each one of them had proceeded from their own independent initiative. The Chief Secretary for Ireland has said that he is not responsible for the Prison Department, or that the Prison Department is not in his Department, and therefore that he has but a secondary responsibility for these matters; and the Solicitor General for Ireland, endeavouring with friendly hand to help out his right hon. Friend, said that they might alter the prison rules, but as long as they were rules they must be obeyed. Father Ryan was one of the first of the reverend gentlemen who fell into the clutches of the Government. When Father Ryan was dispensed from putting on prison dress were the prison rules altered? I think I am justified in saying that they were not. So it appears that without any cumbrous process of sub-legislation the Chief Secretary can do what he likes in such a matter. But the Chief Secretary says it is not in his Department. I never heard in my life, which has been a tolerably long one, a more frivolous and more ludicrous excuse. I have had the honour of holding for twelve or thirteen years the Office of Chancellor of the Exchequer in this country. I do not know how the case is with my right hon. Friend, but I may say that during those twelve or thirteen years, five-sixths of my work—probably nine-tenths—were not in my Department. Does the Chief Secretary think that a Member has no primary responsibility exeept for the routine work brought before him in the official mill? Why, the most important duties of a Member, especially of a Chancellor of the Exchequer and a Chief Secretary, sometimes lie entirely outside their Departments. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is sometimes supposed to labour under a surfeit of bravery. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, I think, applied that epithet to him, and it has been reported so often that it must have become adhesive and can be no longer separated from him. Let me recommend him to exercise his bravery and expend part of the superfluity in owning that he is responsible for the prison rules. One other case I ought to have mentioned, the case of Mr. Davitt. He came under the view of my right hon. Friend near me (Sir W. Harcourt) as Home Secretary, and I can bear testimony to the fact that in point of decency and indulgence his treatment was everything that could reasonably be desired. Therefore I decline entirely to go back to the point at which we might very rationally have stood if this had been the first opening of this question, and to ask for a Parliamentary inquiry upon a matter upon which we have already the definite conclusions of the Government that they have adopted everything, even the worst and most disgraceful in these important particulars, in the established rules. The right hon. Gentleman and the Government have come to the conclusion that Ireland is best governed by Coercion. We hold exactly the reverse, and when my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham thinks this anxiety upon the administrative system in Ireland is but a narrow subject, I differ from him entirely. I doubt whether, if they knew Ireland, they would ever give utterance to such sentiments. It is the anti-national spirit lurking in the administrative system that constitutes the greatest immediate and pressing danger. History supplies us with a most interesting exhibition of the truth of the proposition I have stated. It is so interesting, and so important, that, though I will not detain the House by giving all the details, which I have made it my study to collect, yet I will at least give a sample from one period of Irish history in this century, which fairly brought to issue how much could be done even without remedial legislation to mitigate the condition of Ireland, and to attract the confidence of her people by good administration. It was in times much worse than these, in times when Ireland had not been

relieved, as, thank God, she has now been relieved, of most of her very worst grievances; it was at a time when the Irish people were in a far greater degree than now, a crime-committing people. It was in the time of that eminent man whose name I am glad to sound through this House to the admiration, the gratitude, and the reverential appreciation of his countrymen, Thomas Drummond. In Dublin Castle from 1835 to 1840, when his life ebbed away, a sacrifice to his labours, to his incessant anxieties, and possibly to the calumnies and persecution to which he was subjected, Thomas Drummond not only sat at Dublin Castle, but for those years he walked Dublin Castle, and Dublin Castle came to be in those years in the mind of the Irish people the very reverse of what it is now. During those years the Melbourne Government was able to do nothing in the way of remedial legislation for Ireland, with the exception of the Poor Law Act, passed in 1838, when the time was nearly over. There was no remedial legislation for Ireland, but there was administration in a soothing, a conciliatory, and a national spirit. Thomas Drummond's system of conciliation in Ireland was defended with great skill and courage in the House of Commons by Lord Morpeth, and Viceroys, when occasionally attending in the House of Lords, used to defend it. It will be best understood when I say it was a system which in the main satisfied the desires and demands of O'Connell. What were the results of that system in Ireland? I want to bring to trial the issue whether Coercion is the proper means of putting down mischief and improving the condition of the country. What was done between 1835 and 1839? The question was the subject of inquiry by a hostile Committee sitting in the House of Lords, and the facts were clearly brought out. They were summed up under these heads—diminution of crime, confidence of the people in the law, aversion to crime, and measures taken to put down crime among the people themselves. In those days Lord Plunket, notwithstanding his great eloquence—I know that, in the opinion of Lord Russell, I should not be exaggerating if I said his unrivalled eloquence—was regarded by O'Connell as almost the plague spot of the Government; they were in sharp opposition; but he said in 1836, "I have never known Ireland in such a state of tranquillity as at this moment." What was the case with regard to crime? I give all the serious categories of crime—and I find that whereas in 1834 these crimes amounted to 4,289, in 1838, without the use of coercive powers, although I believe there were some coercive powers on the Statute Book, which could be used, they were reduced to 2,294. What was the attitude of the people towards the agents of the law? Well, it was this. A case happened in Tipperary—which was the great centre of criminal activity—a case happened where a police pensioner was murdered, and that police pensioner was a Protestant. The murderer fled, the police went after him, they brought him back, and Mr. Drummond bore testimony before the Lords' Committee that when the police brought back the murderer to the scene of the crime the people gathered together and cheered the police. Still more remarkable, in those days, in Tipperary a society was formed among the people for the prevention of crime. A society of whom? A society of peasants in Tipperary between 1834 and 1838. Its members entered into pledges one to another; *inter alia*, they were to communicate to a magistrate or some member of their own Committee any facts likely to lead to the prevention of outrage. But there was another thing. They were determined to discourage bad characters. But there was another thing they were to do—to refuse to employ such persons. If those who now exercise power exercised it then, those persons who associated together for this laudable purpose might themselves be brought before the removal judges of the right hon. Gentleman and imprisoned for six months with hard labour, on the ground of having entered into an illegal conspiracy of exclusive dealing. Such were the facts in the time of Thomas Drummond. There, as regards confidence, was confidence then in the Stipendiary Magistrates, confidence in the police, aversion to crime, diminution of crime to one-half, an increase, a considerable increase, in the proportion of convictions to committals. Is that the present state of the case? I say again the acts of Her Majesty's Government ought to be

tested by their results. In my opinion, the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in widening if it existed before, the breach between the people and the Constabulary. That such a breach now exists I cannot doubt for a moment. The confidence in the Stipendiary Magistrates which in Drummond's time was almost a vital principle of their life—where is it now? I am far from saying that the bulk of the Stipendiary Magistrates are either incompetent or unfair; but we say that men like Captain Seagrave, Mr. Cecil Roche, Mr. Gardiner, and some more whose names I am not anxious to unfold, are enough to destroy, and do destroy, the national confidence. Though the right hon. Gentleman shook his head when I said I feared there was now a breach between the people and the Constabulary, he does not shake his head when I say that I fear the confidence of the people in the Stipendiary Magistrates is greatly shaken, and in, I think, many cases almost gone. Ireland is governed now, almost for the first time in my experience, in flat contradiction to the opinions of five-sixths of her entire representation, and one-fourth of her entire representation have been within prison doors and sentenced under the Crimes Act. In what respect are such sentences valuable? They are not valuable on account of the pain they inflict; they are valuable on account of the moral effect they produce. You find it necessary to imprison a fourth of the whole Irish representation—I do not know the exact figures, but I believe I am not setting the number too high when I say that a fourth have been sentenced under the Crimes Act. Well, what is the effect of such sentences in a well-constituted country under a sound system of Government? A sentence of imprisonment marks the man upon whom it is passed as a man whom his neighbours ought to view, and generally do view, with misgiving. In Ireland it is distinctly the contrary—it is a title to public confidence. A prison is becoming under the rule of the present Government a temple of honour. We say now, what will not be doubted, if there were another General Election, and if there were presented to many Irish constituencies gentlemen as candidates of whom they know little, except that they had been imprisoned under the Crimes Act, they would be accepted with favour. I do not know whether the House recollect how this subject was handled in sarcastic verse by Lord Byron when Sir John Hobhouse was sent to prison. Lord Byron wrote—

> "Let Parliament send you to Newgate.
> Newgate will send you to Parliament."

That is literally true in relation to Irish feeling at this moment. But it is not Irish feeling only. Would an Irishman, an Irish criminal, be received in England just now with misgiving, or, at the very least, with suspicion and provisional condemnation? If they were men who were only known to have been sentenced by one of these notorious Magistrates under the Crimes Act, there is hardly a town in England or in Scotland where they would not be hailed with acclamation. And that is the state of things which the right hon. Gentleman and the Government have brought about, and upon which they found their title and their demand to the confidence of the House and the confidence of the country. Sir, as far as we are concerned, we shall go forward upon our course, I will not only say with unabated, but with daily-growing, confidence. To us, Sir, it matters not who is to lead. The strength lies not in the leader, but in the cause. Unfold the pages of history and see what, unaided, without support, sympathy, or confidence on this side of the water, Ireland has in other days, and through long generations of men, achieved for herself in shaking off her yoke and gradually establishing her title to honour and freedom. Alone she has done these things; alone she has made this enormous progress, ratified and crowned in 1782; is she likely now, if she did these things with her own right arm, either to recede or to fail of her purpose, when she has acquired the unhesitating support of a body in this country whom my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) has described, and only too modestly described, as possessed of half the voting power of the constituencies? Such is her power, such are her prospects; and is it to be supposed that half of the constituencies of this country really think, as you do not scruple to declare, that the union of the kingdoms ought to be destroyed and the supremacy of Parliament abolished? You know as well as we know that one moiety of all the constituencies firmly believe

that in giving local liberty to Ireland they are giving life and permanence to the Union, and seeking to establish between the two countries such a state of things that, when it has once been brought into active existence, those who may have been its opponents will by degrees be ashamed of, and will at last forget, the resistance which they have offered to a most blessed and a most beneficial change. Now, I do not deny your power; you have the power in your hands aided by the Septennial Act—you have, perhaps, the power in your hands which will enable you to postpone the solution of this great controversy for two or three years. You have the power to continue to present lists of more than a thousand persons in prison under your so-called Crimes Act; to continue the state of things in which nearly one-sixth of the representatives in this House—say, one-seventh—are placed under ban and proscription, excluded from the service of the Crown, excluded from all those hopes which any other among us is entitled to entertain. You may deprive of its grace and of its freedom the act which you are asked to do. But avert that act you cannot. To prevent the consummation is utterly beyond your power. It seems to approach at an accelerated rate—come it slower or come it quicker, surely it is coming and will come. And you yourselves, many of you, must in your own breasts be aware that already you see in the handwriting on the wall the signs of coming doom.

*The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): There are some words of the speech just delivered by the right hon. Gentleman in which we shall all cordially agree. The right hon. Gentleman said the Opposition had a cause, and that whoever the Leaders might be that cause would grow. We, too, are in the same position. We, too, have a cause, and, whatever the imperfections of the Leaders may be, we believe in our cause, in the maintenance of the Union with just as strong a belief as that expressed by the right hon. Gentleman in his. The right hon. Gentleman says we all know the act will come. What act? This great consummation! What consummation? The consummation is carefully concealed, not only from us, but from the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman. It is often interesting to watch how, when the right hon. Gentleman uses a phrase to content his supporters above the Gangway, there is immediately a significant abstention from cheering by hon. Members below the Gangway. I trust that the House will permit me, although still under the spell of the right hon. Gentleman, to attempt to follow him through the main portions of his speech. I do not propose to follow him in those extraordinary arithmetical problems with regard to bye-elections which he put before us. Hon. Members opposite will find that these figures will be answered. But I think there are far more important matters to deal with, and I should be sorry to devote to that question the time which was given to it by the right hon. Gentleman. There is one respect in which, if I can do so without offence, I would like to draw a favourable contrast between the speech of the right hon. Gentleman and many of those—almost all of those—which preceded it. The whole of the debate up to this time, so far as it came from that side of the House, has consisted of a long-sustained and venomous attack upon my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman on the other hand properly held, not my right hon. Friend, but the Government as a whole, responsible for what is going on in Ireland. We have never shrunk from that responsibility. We are associated with my right hon. Friend, and if the right hon. Gentleman says that I have used the word "bravery" with regard to my right hon. Friend outside this House, I am prepared to support it here, and I know that it will be endorsed in their hearts by every single Member sitting on the opposite Bench. Those who have been here during the whole of these proceedings will know how bitterly my right hon. Friend has been attacked. It is, of course, the recognized procedure of Members opposite below the Gangway of the Nationalist Party to attempt to worry Chief Secretaries into physical collapse. They have had some successes in the past with Irish Chief Secretaries not all alive now; there are some who have borne in their constitution the permanent results of the calumnies, worries, and attacks to which they

were persistently exposed. I think the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division (Sir G. Trevelyan) might tell us a somewhat pathetic story of the way in which those whom now he is covering with fulsome oratorical caresses in this House inflicted upon him moral and almost physical torture. But it has been found that my right hon. Friend the present Chief Secretary wears a coat of mail, from which the daggers of calumny glance off. His imperturbable temper has been able to defy all the attacks which have been made upon him. Hence the ever-increasing violence, hence the symptoms which we have seen in this debate of men hitting out wildly, frantically, and at random at my right hon. Friend. But we believe on this side of the House that the great majority of those who sit opposite do not believe for one moment most of the charges brought against my right hon. Friend. No, not even the right hon. Member for Sheffield believes in half of that which is said against my right hon. Friend. I will test this. Do hon. Members opposite below the Gangway, and the majority of those on that bench, believe that the Chief Secretary inflicts indignities on prisoners for the mere pleasure of venting his spite? [Mr. T. M. HEALY: On O'Brien; yes, certainly.] Do they believe it? [*Home Rule cries*, "They do."] These charges are put forward on public platforms, but they are not really believed in by any responsible man in this House. Let me follow the right hon. Gentleman into the question of the treatment of prisoners. The right hon. Gentleman, with great dialectical acumen, prefaced his introduction of this part of the question by saying that he would not be entangled into any argument with regard to the definition of prisoners. Well, he was extremely wise in avoiding that subject, because all authorities are agreed that political prisoners ought to be treated differently from ordinary prisoners. But the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to quote precedents of men who had committed political offences, and then he applied the precedents to prisoners who are condemned for ordinary offences. The right hon. Gentleman quoted certain cases. In most of those cases the offences were unquestionably political. The case of O'Connell, for instance, was distinctly a political offence; and if these offences were committed now, I apprehend that those who committed them would be treated as political prisoners and as State prisoners, as they have been treated in the past.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Let me remind the right hon. Gentleman——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am coming to the right hon. Gentleman presently. I do not think the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian was interrupted in the course of his speech.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I am only going to remind the right hon. Gentleman ——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The Chancellor of the Exchequer is in possession of the House.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I shall have something to say to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford presently. I know he has taken a great interest in this question, and therefore I waited to hear what he had to say. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian went back to State prisoners and political prisoners of former times, and I think he dealt with one contemporary case. He spoke of the treatment of Mr. Michael Davitt. Is he aware that Mr. Michael Davitt was treated as a convict in the first instance, and that it was only on his return to prison, after he had had a ticket-of-leave, that the treatment began to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded? I should like to know whether the case of the right hon. Gentleman will break down if Michael Davitt was treated as a convict at any time. The right hon. Gentleman said he would quote precedents. He should not care much for precedents, but he has not taken the pains to examine the case of Mr. Davitt.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): It was not a political offence the first time.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Listen to the Member for Derby. He says it was not a political offence at all the first time. Neither are these political offences which have been committed more recently by Members of this House and others. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian does not care to entangle himself, but the Member for Derby is bolder, and

ventures on the definition of political prisoners; but let it be understood, not only in this House, but in the country, if we are charged with having introduced this system, that it is the system which has been applied by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and that it is the accepted criminal administration of the country, and was so during the whole time when the right hon. Gentleman himself was in office. And mark this further point. When did this indignation begin? It began with the case of Mr. William O'Brien. Then it was that the mayors and the representatives of local government in Ireland commenced to display an extraordinary activity in visiting Members of this House who were incarcerated. The mayors were content to allow these alleged indignities to be put upon humbler persons. It was only when the law was applied to Members of Parliament—to the makers of the law who had become breakers of the law—that the sympathy began. It is on their account that this great anxiety is felt and manifested. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland defended himself with regard to the charge brought against him as to his responsibility for the treatment of these prisoners. It appeared to me that the case was perfectly clear. In the ordinary way, the Prisons Board carries out the orders and regulations which are laid down by Parliament, and it is only when an exceptional case is brought by the Prisons Board before the Chief Secretary that he can interfere. He is not the executive officer. The right hon. Gentleman opposite did not pretend that he was the executive officer. But the Government of Ireland have not declined, and do not decline general responsibility for all that is done in Ireland. I should like hon. Members opposite to elect whether they consider that the Chief Secretary administers the law and is to be held to administer the law, or whether he is not. The right hon. Gentleman challenged me upon the case of Mr. Timothy Harrington [An hon. MEMBER: Mr. Edward Harrington.] No; I mean the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin. I think that the right hon. Gentleman called attention to his case as proof of different action by a previous Administration. The sentence on Mr. Timothy Harrington was confirmed on appeal—and I call attention to the dates—on February 13, 1883. He was arrested and committed to gaol on the 16th of February. He was then put on a plank bed, and in other respects was "subjected to the prison regulations like every other convict." Was that known to the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan) at the time? He was administering the law. Hon. Members opposite consider that the present Chief Secretary administers the law. ("Hear, hear," *from the Irish Members.*) Well, then, was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton, who enjoys the confidence of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian—was he, or was he not, administering the law? Why this plank bed? Why this indignity put upon a Member of Parliament? "Is it not disgraceful," says the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian? He cannot find in his vocabulary words strong enough to condemn us.

MR. GLADSTONE: For defending it and adopting it.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Then I hope the right hon. Gentleman will at once address a lecture to his old colleague, the Member for Bridgeton. I thought, perhaps, the right hon. Gentleman might take that line. I was reading an answer given by the Member for Bridgeton in this House. I could not read out the inverted commas, but they were there. The right hon. Gentleman said: "Subject to the prison regulations, like every other convict." That means plank bed, cleaning out the cell, and other indignities, of which a description has been given. Now the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian says he cannot find words strong enough to condemn us for defending that proposition. Then I come to the right hon. Member for Bradford. What has he got to say to his Colleague and Friend the Member for Bridgeton? Action was taken in this matter, but when? It was on the 24th of February. For eight long days Mr. Timothy Harrington was under the prison regulations administered by the right hon. Member for Bridgeton, the Chief Secretary of the day, and he remained subject to those indignities for the infliction of which Her Majesty's present Government are to be held up to the execration of the constituencies.

The conscience of the Member for Bridgeton was not pricked until the case of Mr. Harrington was brought to the attention, not of the right hon. Member for Bridgeton, who was held mainly responsible, but of Lord Spencer. How was his attention called to it? By questions asked in this House and by the comments made upon the right hon. Gentleman's replies. Even then the right hon. Gentleman told the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) that he would not admit that the offence was political. When the agitation commenced Mr. Harrington was removed to a more comfortable prison. That was on the 27th of February.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: On what date?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: On the 1st of March, the Member for Bridgeton answered in this House that the Lord Lieutenant had ordered his transfer to another prison.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: Did I not state likewise that the treatment was completely changed?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I should think that that was very likely. I do not believe that the right hon. Gentleman did make that announcement, but it is highly probable that this was the case. But the point is that the right hon. Gentleman's conscience was not pricked until a political agitation had been raised which he had not the courage to face in this House. The case of Mr. Timothy Harrington has been quoted side by side with that of Mr. Michael Davitt, and these two cases are the precedents to which we are to give our attention. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary has throughout contended that the cases which have been cited against him are not cases of political offences, and he throws back in the teeth of every one who ventures to make it, the assertion that there has not been the slightest deviation in the direction of harshness or indignity in the case of any one of his political opponents. It was an odious charge to make, a charge which never ought to have been made, and one which ought never to have been repeated. I think the Member for Bradford is anxious for a little attention, because with the Member for Bradford the treatment of political prisoners is an old and a pet subject. He took a special interest in it, for he himself thought he might be able to qualify for becoming a Member for an Irish Constituency by being put in gaol as a political prisoner. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking on this subject, quoted to the House the remarks of County Court Judge Mr. O'Connor Morris, before whom the appeal of Mr. P. O'Brien, M.P., was taken, and the right hon. Gentleman thought he had scored a good point. Now there is no better way of scoring a good point than by stopping a quotation at a convenient stage. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the views of Judge O'Connor Morris with regard to the treatment of Mr. Hayden and Mr. P. O'Brien. Judge Morris said that he "did not think he exceeded his powers in exempting those Gentlemen from the harsh treatment of ordinary prisoners. In cases of sedition, the Act provided that the accused should be treated as first-class misdemeanants, and the cases before him approached nearer sedition than anything else." Accordingly the Judge ordered them to be so treated. That was the quotation read by the right hon. Member for Bradford, but he omitted the continuation of Judge Morris's remarks which was in these words: "He was sorry that he could not extend the same mitigation to Mr. Byrne. Danger, death, blood, murder had followed words of this kind," that is of the kind used by Mr. Byrne, and he confirmed the sentence. Mark the words, for I have special reason in calling attention to them: "Danger, death, blood, and murder have followed words of this kind." The Judge, therefore, exposed Mr. Byrne to the degradation of an ordinary criminal. We contend that in many of these cases words are used of the kind which are followed by danger, death, blood, and murder.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE rose amid cries of "Order" and "Chair.": I have a right to make an explanation. The right hon. Gentleman has accused me of not quoting it with regard to the case of Messrs. O'Brien and Hayden, and I went on to say they were charged with language at least as strong, or stronger, than any used by any Member of this House.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: But, Sir, he omitted the case of Mr. Byrne.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Yes; because there the language was extremely strong.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I think the right hon. Gentleman will agree with me that he had another reason for suppressing that interesting part of the quotation. Mr. Byrne, the House will be interested to learn, was the most prominent member of the Reception Committee of the right hon. Gentleman himself.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Allow me to say I never saw and I never heard of him before in that connection. [*Cries of* "Oh."] Never.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I think the right hon. Gentleman is a little ungrateful.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I said I never heard of him, and I do not know him.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Well then, Mr. Byrne knows the right hon. Gentleman, and I do not know what view Mr. Byrne will take of the right hon. Gentleman's repudiation. It is not always that Members of this House present the belligerent and bellicose appearance here that they assume when in Ireland as representatives of the British democracy. I think I have dealt sufficiently with these allegations, both as regards precedents and as regards the allegations of cruelty. I have shown that the precedents quoted do not apply, because they are precedents of political prisoners, and, in regard to ordinary offenders, I have shown that they are treated now precisely as they were treated before. They were treated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite precisely as they are treated now. If there is to be a change, I repeat what has been said by my right hon. Friend—it must be a change all round. It must be a change which applies to men of culture condemned for similar offences in this country as well as in Ireland. Our contention is that men who are sentenced for these offences, which are not political, are not entitled to exemption from the prison rules. One word more as to the nature of offences. It is not a political act or offence to refrain from paying a debt. It is another kind of offence altogether—an offence of a very different character; and if so, then language inciting to that offence cannot surely be described as political. There may be a political motive behind. Very probably there is, but the acts themselves are not political. I pass from the treatment of political offenders to the general charge which is brought by the right hon. Gentleman, and by other speakers, against the Irish Constabulary generally, of harshness.

MR. GLADSTONE: I brought no charge against them.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I think the right hon. Gentleman did abstain from attacking the police on the occasion, but he accuses the Administration of harshness; and I presume he endorses part of the accusation brought from the opposite bench against that gallant force. I do not think it can be too often repeated that the Irish Constabulary, under great and constant provocation, have behaved with as much restraint and prudence as any body of police in the world have ever done. I presume the Irish Police cannot be expected, more than any other body of men, to maintain an angelic temper, and, when they are wounded and blinded with stones, to wield the baton with softness and graduated force. To expect that would be going too far. We ought to give these men, who, after all, are Irishmen themselves, credit for having on the whole behaved with admirable self-restraint. ["No, no."] Well, I will put an argument to hon. Members below the Gangway. I will assume that the hon. Members who constitute the Nationalist Party had to be sworn in as special constables and to act under the guidance of the Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy). Do they pretend that if they had then to deal with a crowd of Orangemen, they would show as much temper and restraint as has been shown by the Irish Constabulary? There is no country in Europe, certainly not in America, where anything like the same moderation would have been observed as has been observed by the police in Ireland. The next charge brought in this long indictment has been against the Resident Magistrates. But it has been shown that appeals against their decisions have been successful in a less proportion of cases than appeals against decisions under the ordinary law. [MR. T. HEALY: Hear, hear.] I observe that the hon. and learned Member for Longford cheers that. On the other

hand, their freedom from vindictiveness has been constantly shown by their not inflicting punishment if the prisoners promised not to offend again. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has said that the Magistrates do not enjoy the confidence of the people as they ought to enjoy it, and that there is a wide gulf between the population and the Resident Magistrates. If that charge is well-founded, at whose door rests the blame? A great part of it must be at the door of the Party opposite, who appointed many of these Magistrates. I am not sure that they have not appointed the majority of them, though they are now forward in all parts of the country in denouncing them. [An hon. MEMBER: Law and order.] Yes, you are anxious to upset law and order in Ireland. We are not surprised, but we are sorry for the treatment which these men are receiving at the hands of those who have been responsible Members of the Crown. I cannot follow the right hon. Gentleman over the whole of what he said in his references to the Coercion Act and the treatment of crime, but I come to a point—and a most important and significant point—in his address. He dealt, not for the first time, but certainly in a novel manner, with the Plan of Campaign. He said it was the direct and necessary result of what had preceded it, and then he said, "I do not vindicate the Plan." Well, I think you cannot vindicate a plan more strongly than by saying it is absolutely necessary. The words, "I do not vindicate the Plan," will, very likely, be forgotten, but the fact that the right hon. Gentleman said the Plan is a direct and necessary consequence of what has preceded it will pass current in Ireland, where that wicked system exists which has laid desolate so great a part of the country—that wicked system under which many thousands of acres of Irish land, to the contentment of hon. Members opposite, continue to lie waste.

An Hon. MEMBER: Are they all let now?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Not all let; but more and more let from day to day, and more will be let from day to day, if the hon. Member for East Mayo does not send out his band of warriors to endeavour to check the desire of the Irish people once more to cultivate those farms. The right hon. Gentleman dealt with the Plan of Campaign, and thought it was the direct and necessary result of what had preceded.

MR. GLADSTONE: Of your conduct.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Of our conduct—I understand that. The right hon. Gentleman went through several years—1886, 1887, and 1888—and in dealing with 1886, I think the right hon. Gentleman used the words that the misery commenced in 1886.

MR. GLADSTONE: I said that the effects of the agricultural crisis were fully established in 1886.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: Yes; and therefore it commenced before. I do not care whether it was commenced or established—at all events it existed before. What I want to point out to the right hon. Gentleman and the country is this, that the misery having commenced before and been established in 1886—I do not want to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman—he proposed at that time an immense system of land purchase founded upon a normal rate of 20 years' purchase on the rents—the unjust judicial rents—those rents the arrears of which are now always, by a stretch of language, and judged by a subsequent standard, denounced as unjust. Those rents were to be stereotyped in the year 1886 by an immense system of purchase which was to cover the whole of Ireland, and under which the credit of this country would have been strained to the uttermost. The Irish tenants would have continued to pay on the basis of those unjust rents which, now that the Conservative Government is in office, are considered to be the ruin of Ireland, and to have led up as a direct and necessary consequence to the Plan of Campaign. Which alternative does the right hon. Gentleman choose—he who is a master of finance, he who has had at heart, as much as any man that ever lived, the credit and resources of the country? If this plan had been adopted would there have been wholesale repudiation, or would the unhappy tenantry of Ireland have continued—under his auspices, and at his initiation, and by his draft on English credit—to pay those rents which are considered now to be unjust rents, and for which the land-

lords are not only to be denounced, but are to forfeit all their rights as citizens of the country? I want to roll away from us the charge which the right hon. Gentleman brings, that it is we who are responsible for this state of things. What would you have said if your present Leader had fastened these rents upon you? It would have taken a great deal of ingenuity on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite to enable them to regard him as having bestowed a blessing on Ireland; or would they have rewarded his efforts for Home Rule by repudiating the terms he had settled? Well, our attitude towards rents is totally different from that of the right hon. Gentleman, who wanted to stereotype those rents for ever. He charges us with not having dealt with the question of arrears, and says it is that question which has led to the present difficulty, and to the recrudescence of agitation and crime. Well, but there have been other Arrears Acts passed, and I deny the assumption that the passing of an Arrears Act has satisfied, or ever would satisfy, the Irish tenants. It would demoralize them and keep up that attitude of expectation which discourages the payment of rent and the fulfilment of contracts, and teaches those who have paid that they have been foolish in their day. I ask, therefore, is it fair to say that the non-fulfilment of the wishes of hon. Members opposite with regard to the Arrears Act is at the bottom of this difficulty? I have no doubt that on some estates, if you had wiped out all arrears and allowed tenants to pay what they liked, there would have been on those estates less trouble than at present; but how about the neighbouring estates, where the example would have been seen? It must be patent to every mind that the passing of periodical Arrears Bills is no settlement but an opening up of the agrarian question in its worst form. I say again, therefore, we were not only within our right, but it was our duty also, notwithstanding the pressure put upon us, to act as we did. The right hon. Gentleman forgets that he omitted from his catalogue of events the fact that we did in 1887 pass a measure for the relief of the Irish tenants—as liberal a measure as could be passed—a measure which at least he ought not to have omitted from his enumeration of the doings or misdoings of Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman contends—it is an argument which has been used many times during the course of this debate—that though we claim that there is an improvement in Ireland, and an improvement in every direction, nevertheless that improvement is not due in any way to the action of Her Majesty's Government. Some improvement is now admitted by all; in spite of the efforts of hon. Members opposite, rents are beginning to be better paid, the tenants are beginning to be more satisfied, the relations between the constabulary and the population are improving. I wish I had time to cite all the symptoms of returning prosperity to Ireland. They are sneered at by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, who speaks of the efforts of my right hon. Friend for the material development of Ireland with some contempt; but I do not think that is the view of the bulk of the Irish people. When that Front Bench was entirely empty—I do not know whether it was because it was empty—an hon. Member from Ireland complained of the neglect of the material interests of Ireland by various and successive Governments. Well, then there was this marked improvement—an improvement recognized by all; and what happened? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has told you the improvement was going on too fast, and measures had to be taken to prevent its continuance. Hon. Members opposite ask "Why, if there is this improvement which you claim in your Address to the Crown, is there also an increase in the number of prosecutions?" That seems a very logical and natural question to put; but the answer is that the increased number of prosecutions is due to the attempts of those who thought improvement was going on too fast to check that improvement—to make a despairing effort once more to defeat, if they could, the process of contentment which had begun to dawn—a dawn which did not smile upon the political prospects of the Nationalist Party. They know that prosperity is Unionist. Yes, prosperity is Unionist; I do not say

prosperous persons, but I say that the prosperity of the country would be one of the greatest destructives of the policy of hon. Members opposite. They love to point to the miseries of the Irish people, and they endeavour to work in that way upon the generous impulses of the constituencies of this country. Therefore, when we were able to go and tell the constituencies that there was progress, that farms were being taken, and that men were again in a position wherein they could follow their own bent and use their own liberty, then this effort had to be made; then came the recrudescence of agitation in Kerry and elsewhere; then came the emissaries of the National League to spread abroad again their baneful influence, with its usual baneful effects, and again there was crime in Ireland. [An hon. MEMBER: Quote.] Do you wish me to quote? Do you want me to harrow the feelings of this House with outrages, which I think even the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would be willing to treat as crimes? He spoke of the nature of those crimes; did he know that they included the maiming of cattle? Did he know that they included some of the most brutal acts that can disgrace a population? And, if so, why does he cover up these offences or crimes—call them what you will—spreading over them a kind of veil, and speaking of these agrarian crimes as if they were of an ordinary character? Crime re-appeared, and what was the duty of the Chief Secretary? It was to endeavour to lay hold of the men who were once more applying the torch to the combustible material. He imprisoned them, and he was right in imprisoning them; and I do not believe the conscience of the country can revolt against the laying hold of and putting in prison the men who are endeavouring to thwart that very process of conciliation which right hon. Gentlemen opposite declare that they are so anxious to see carried out. The Chief Secretary was aware of this campaign—I do not know whether the right hon. Member for Newcastle approves of it—and counteracted it, and did his best to incarcerate the men who were once more endeavouring to produce agitation in Ireland. It was sought to carry out this campaign on some of the best estates in Ireland, on the estates of men who have granted reductions to a point far below the judicial rents which would have been stereotyped for ever in Ireland by the action of the right hon. Gentleman. It was some of the best landlords in Ireland whose estates were selected for attack, and it was with respect to them that hon. Members endeavoured once more to inflict misery and ruin. Yes; misery and ruin, for which I am afraid even their resources will not be able to compensate their victims, because I must say that I think it is misery and ruin for tenants to live in campaign huts rather than on the comfortable farms from which they have been evicted, and I would like to know the result of a vote by ballot among the evicted tenants, evicted under the orders of the National League—I would like to know the opinion of these men who have been unable to utilize the rise in prices, whose hopes are diminishing day by day, of never being able again to occupy their farms, because their position has been utilized for the political purposes of hon. Members opposite—utilized to bring about Home Rule. They will pay a heavy price for the futile efforts which are being made to bring about a consummation which will never arrive. [Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Burnley: Ayr Burghs.] You may have your new Parliament, but your new Parliament will not give the Home Rule you desire. So much with regard to the material prosperity in Ireland. But I do not like to sit down without meeting the challenge of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian on the question of local government in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman responded to the appeal of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. For the first time in this debate the right hon. Gentleman said, "We invite you to the consideration of measures of conciliation and contentment." The invitation came from the right hon. Gentleman on the fifth day of a long debate, but up to this time, and until the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had delivered his speech, we heard little but a tedious repetition of particular instances where it was maintained that the Resident Magistrates might have given wrong decisions, or where the police behaved with some violence. It is only to-day that the Leader of the Party opposite

opens up this idea of conciliation and contentment, and he invites us to express our view on the subject. But I am bound to say that it was extremely little he told us of the measures of conciliation which he himself would be able to propose. He made a long indictment against the Unionist Party, and mainly against the Liberal Unionists, that they had neglected local government in Ireland, and that they had refrained from carrying out the instructions which they had received from their constituents. [Mr. T. P. O'Connor: Your pledges.] I propose in a very few words to deal with that charge. What is the primary mandate which the Conservative and the Liberal Unionist Parties have received? It is the mandate to maintain the Union. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham dealt admirably with this point the previous day. Now, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian said that he would not accept the explanation that the agitation had had anything to do with the non-fulfilment of what he called our pledges. I would ask hon. Members, if they are reasonable, to say in what year and at what time we ought to have begun dealing with local government in Ireland? I admit the enormous interest of the Irish Question. We have given proof of our interest in it, in and out of this House; but I do venture to put in one single humble word for the other portions of the United Kingdom. We are entitled to consider the order in which we should deal with England, Scotland, and Ireland. We are reproached with not having been able to deal with local government in Ireland; but I want to know when we ought to have given it? In 1886? I should like to know what chance there was of carrying it in that year? In 1887 we had enough work to do with Ireland. We had to deal with the land question, and in 1888 we had to deal with local government in England. I do not think we could possibly have undertaken to deal with local government in Ireland before England. That being the case, we dealt with local government in England at the earliest possible date we could, and I think, on the whole, hon. Members from Ireland will agree that the turn of Scotland comes next. That reminds me of the exclamation of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian—that the denial of local government to Ireland was equivalent to coercion. I never heard a more extraordinary sentence in my life. We have heard many definitions of coercion; but I am sure that a queerer one than that has never been given. Do they maintain that we are coercing Scotland at this moment because she has not been able to receive local self-government? Now, hon. Members opposite are entitled to ask, "Do you repudiate the pledge, the desire to extend local self-government to Ireland?" I reply, "Certainly not." What right has the right hon. Gentleman to say that it would certainly not be dealt with in the present Parliament? It must depend to a great extent on the right hon. Gentleman himself, and upon hon. Members from Ireland. If I rightly read the attitude of the Nationalist Party, when they prevent Bills from passing which aim at increasing the material prosperity of their country, I doubt very much whether we shall receive much support from them in any measure of local self-government for Ireland, I mean, of course, in the sense in which it is applied in Scotland and in England. Witness the attitude of hon. Members opposite to the extension of Lord Ashbourne's Act. What chance would there have been; what chance would there be this year or next year that any efforts on our part would receive even fair treatment? I have constantly observed that when hon. Members opposite have heard allusions to local self-government in Ireland they have abstained from any expression of a desire to see such local self-government established. They may want it after they have got their National Parliament; they do not want it before; and if not before, I should like to know whether there is any chance that an honest effort on the part of the Government would meet with any kind of response from those who guide the counsels of the Front Opposition Bench? My right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin made a proposal for which there is much to be urged. It is that local self-government should be granted to Ireland, but that all local self-government should be suspended in disturbed districts. How would a proposal of this kind be received by the Opposition? It is a proposal which may be good; it is a proposal which I do not at all con-

demn; but I think it would require a considerable amount of Parliamentary time in order to carry it into effect. But what are the conditions now for establishing local self-government in Ireland? What do we wish, in establishing it, in all parts of the kingdom? What we wish is that the people in each locality should take an interest in local life, and that they should rise to the performance of municipal duties. But what would happen if you established local self-government in Ireland to-morrow? It would be entirely controlled by a central political clique and worked for political purposes. It would be throttled in its cradle at once by the political turn which would be given to it from its very birth. Have we proofs of that at the present time? [*Cries of* "No!"] No? Why, you boast of establishing a political citadel in every Municipality in Ireland, in the Boards of Guardians, and the Corporations. There is the Lord Mayor of Dublin himself. Ask him whether the Dublin Municipality is not tinged with a strong political colour? Municipal institutions would not be worked at present for the true development of local self-government in Ireland. They would be worked for the purpose of furthering the political designs which it is our business to oppose. So soon as we can take securities that local self-government shall not be perverted in this way to political and Separatist purposes we shall only be too anxious to give that local self-government to Ireland which we intend and are anxious to extend to all parts of Her Majesty's dominions. But we must bear our general mandate in our minds. In carrying out that great task which has been put into our hands, the task of governing Ireland in face of an opposition such as no Executive Government has ever had to encounter, hon. Members opposite may think that we are discouraged. But we see hope through the clouds. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian turned to history, and spoke of the attitude and difficulties of previous Governments. But I should like him, with all his historical lore, to be able to cite, either from his own experience or from the annals he has read, one case where a Government, struggling for the maintenance of law and order, endeavouring to enforce and maintain the law, has been met in the manner in which we have been met by men who are responsible as much as the Government not only for the happiness of this Kingdom, but also for its traditions and its character. But we have the surest signs that we are making progress. We have the evidence of our opponents themselves, the evidence afforded by the frantic efforts which are made to kindle an agitation into flames again when that agitation has ceased to be spontaneous, and has ceased to be spontaneous because contentment prevails. You say "No," but I can quote a witness whom, perhaps, you will not reject. What said the Member for South Tipperary to his friends there? He said—

> "Has it come to this, that Tipperary, the very name of which in the past has made landlordism quake and fear; that Tipperary, whose name has many a time and oft compelled the oppressor to lay down his arms, should be the snug and comfortable home of the emergency man and the land-grabber; has it come to this, that even to Tipperary an emissary must come down and exclaim. Has it come to this!'"

Yes; it has come to this, that the tenants of Ireland now require to be lashed into agitation, and that is our answer to the indictment which is made against us. It has come to this, that in these signs and symptoms we see grounds for confidence and for hope. Our duty we must firmly persist in; but I maintain that at no time in the history of the present Administration have we had more ground for confidence and hope than exists at this moment.

*MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire): In the very few words to which I have to ask the attention of the House I shall not lay myself open to the censure of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham for neglect of the second part of the Amendment now before the House. It was inevitable and right that the Government and the Leaders of all Parties should be first called to account before this House for all that has been said or done and omitted to be done during the Recess, and this has been done with great ability, thoroughness, and severity. I am sure the House and the country will consider with great interest the significance of the treatment of the right hon. Gentleman of the question of the future, as throwing some gleams of light upon the ideas of his Party and that with which he is allied. His challenge, however, ought surely to have been

addressed to his allies, who are charged with the Government of the country, and over whom his Party are in the position to exercise almost despotic influence, for it is with those allies that for the present the power of initiation lies. Necessary as has been the debate on the first part of this Amendment, I am sure patriotic men of both sides will feel that what is most important in this debate is its future effect on the contentment and welfare of Ireland and the real union of the two countries. What I wish to ask the House to consider, and what I cannot help thinking the country is wishing both parties to consider, is whether, after the Government and the Leaders of the Irish people have been called to account in this debate for the past, it is not desirable that there should be an end to this everlasting crimination and recrimination, and whether our statesmen might not agree to proclaim what was called in olden times the truce of God, and try whether they could not find some outcome or settlement of this question, just alike to Ireland, and beneficial to both countries, by the combined wisdom of our statesmen? It might at first seem strange to suggest this at the present moment, but there have been more than once in the last 12 months openings for such a settlement. If the Conservative Government had only taken the advice of their allies as to the arrears question, so that the admittedly excessive rents might not have left excessive arrears to allow Lord Clanricarde, and those who act like him, to undo all the good done by the reasonable settlements by the majority of landlords and tenants of their mutual interests. Again, had Government, as their allies advised, postponed until it was necessary the proclamation of the Land League; or, again, had the Opposition accepted the offer of the Government in July to consent to the prolongation of Lord Ashbourne's Act, to be followed by the production of a comprehensive Bill for the settlement of the land question this Session—in the first case, Ireland would now be as peaceable as Lancashire; and, in the second case, we should have been now discussing the Land Bill in which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian's help must have been asked and given for the conversion of the greater part of the tenants of Ireland into owners. The forty millions necessary for this would have been readily granted for any measure supported by both political Parties and by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. Then inevitably must have followed the desire for some authorized body in Ireland with whom the necessary bargain could be made; and it would have been found that by adopting precautions from the experience of the Free States of America, this body, constitutionally guarded and conditioned, could have been formed without the risk of ruin to either England or Ireland. This hope may seem visionary, but history often proves the truth of the old proverb that "when the night is darkest the dawn is nighest;" and I cannot help thinking that the weariness of the nation of this mutual abuse and vituperation will force upon both Parties some such settlement as I have foreshadowed. Towards it I think the history of Ireland and the experience of Free States has pointed a way, and to it you will have to come sooner or later, and the sooner our statesmen look at the subject from this point of view the easier will be their task. Surely this is the lesson which the recurrence of such debates and Motions under successive Ministries teaches us; and if the Chief Secretary, and the right hon. Members for Mid-Lothian and for Rossendale, and the hon. Member for Cork, each with their best *aide-de-camp*, would meet after the bitterness of this debate is over, and, putting aside personal animosities and personal feelings, treat the question of Ireland like statesmen, is it unreasonable or visionary to believe that some satisfactory settlement could be come to? When are the House and the Government likely to have a more favourable time for the settlement than at present, when agriculture is more prosperous in Ireland than for many years, distress and disorder diminished, and its people thereby predisposed to contentment with a reasonable settlement? The speech of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham will be encouraging to the Liberal Party, in so far that it shows that he, an influential Member of the Unionist Party, feels that the time has come when other than measures of repression are necessary for Ireland. The Unionist Party hold the balance of power in their hands, and with that are

under heavy responsibility. They ought to have enforced the wise counsel given by their Leader as to the settlement of the arrears question and the delay in the proclamation of the League. But I am sure the Liberal Party will be inclined to let the dead bury their dead, if they will only now insist on a liberal measure for the settlement of the land question and the extension of self-government to Ireland, the necessity for which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham has admitted in the clearest terms.

MR. HENRY SETON-KARR (St. Helens): In the speeches which have already been delivered in the course of this debate, I have listened to a good many sentimental platitudes, but I have heard nothing whatever that has in the smallest degree suggested any foundation whatever for the Motion before the House. I listened with very great interest to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, to the wealth of language with which he poured the viols of his wrath upon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and to his eloquent peroration; but during that speech I heard nothing to alter my firm conviction that there is no foundation whatever for the Amendment. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian made an attack upon Her Majesty's Government in regard to the question of local government, but the answer returned to him by the Chancellor of the Exchequer has completely shattered that attack. I suppose that one of the most interesting speeches we have had was that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley). There is, however, one thing which I must say in reference to that speech. My Parliamentary experience has been very short, but one thing which caused me a considerable amount of surprise was that the right hon. Gentleman should have taunted the Government with respect to a matter arising out of the Special Commission, when he knew that on that subject the Government could make no reply. In the concluding sentence of his speech, the right hon. Gentleman said the present Government have been one long fraud upon the constituencies of the country. Let me for a moment examine that matter. I presume that he meant that the action of Her Majesty's Government and the action of the Unionist Party have been at variance with the election cry with which they went to the country in 1886. Now, what was that cry? It was the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, the maintenance of law and order, and no Home Rule for the Irish people in the sense in which it had been proposed in the Bill of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. I submit that in every one of these particulars this Government and the Unionist Party have kept faith with the country, and that they have in every respect followed the main lines of the policy with which they went to the country. The Government began with a Crimes Act, which was necessary in order to maintain law and order, and then they proceeded with a great measure of domestic legislation—the Local Government Bill—which it is proposed to extend to Scotland, and which I hope will soon be extended to Ireland. There has been, therefore, no fraud upon the constituencies, their policy has been entirely in accordance with their pledges to the country in 1886, and the charge is made by those who desire to obtain Home Rule against the verdict of the constituencies. That desire accounts for the persistent opposition with which the measures of the Government have been met. As a proof of this I may mention the fact that last Session some 7,000 speeches were delivered from the Opposition Benches as compared with 4,000 from hon. Members on this side of the House. In addition, the House was kept sitting here until Christmas Eve, all owing to the way in which our time was wasted. Who are the men who bring serious accusations against the Chief Secretary and Her Majesty's Government? They are the men who in 1882 and 1885 endeavoured to govern Ireland with far greater severity and much less consistency than the present Unionist Government is now doing. Therefore I do not think it lies in the mouth of right hon. Gentlemen opposite to accuse the Government of having in any way committed a fraud upon the constituencies. What did the Liberal Government do in 1885? Having appealed to the country to give them a strong Liberal majority, and having, after the Election of 1885, found themselves practically in a minority without the Irish vote,

they then proceeded to spring Home Rule upon the country, and to relegate their Radical programme to a distant future. Then, if it lies in the mouth of either Party to accuse the other of fraud on the constituencies, I think we could very well retort upon right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I should like to read a short and interesting document which bears upon this point. It was issued in November, 1885, and is addressed to our "countrymen" by the Leaders of the National Party. It earnestly advises "our countrymen" to vote against the men who were coercing Ireland, that is —right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and it was signed by T. P. O'Connor, J. E. Redmond, J. O'Kelly, J. Biggar, T. M. Healy, and others. Taken in connection with this debate, I think it is an interesting and instructive document, because it illustrates better than anything else the false attitude of right hon. Gentlemen opposite who have moved and support the Amendment to the Address. The conversion to Home Rule of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire has been so recent that I see that in the Parliamentary Guide the letter "U" still appears against his name. Last night the hon. Gentleman explained the reasons why he has changed his mind, and endeavoured to account for his chequered political career. I do not think he need have taken so much trouble to explain his inconsistency. He is not the only Member sitting opposite who has changed his mind very recently and very violently on the Irish question. One thing I was rather surprised at, and that was, that the right hon. Gentleman should have spoken so confidently about the mind of the country. Personally, I am rather loth to accept information on the subject filtered through a mind which it has taken so long to make up. I listened with some astonishment to the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton. The hon. Gentleman devoted a considerable portion of the time he occupied to flinging across the floor of the House the extraordinary taunt that the Conservative Party have sought to make much political capital out of certain famous letters which have now been proved to be forgeries. I am most heartily glad that those letters have been proved to be the production of a clumsy forger, but I was surprised that the hon. Member should, without producing the chapter and verse for it, have made the charge I have stated. I repudiate his assertion, and challenge him to prove that any member of the Unionist Party has ever endeavoured to make political capital out of the forged letters. Now, I intend to give a most hearty vote in support of Her Majesty's Government, and I desire to give another reason for doing so. In my opinion the policy of Her Majesty's Government has resulted not only in the maintenance of law and order in the Sister Isle, but has tended very greatly to promote the prosperity of the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) sneered at the thought of the present prosperity of Ireland resulting from the Unionist policy. I do not suppose this policy is responsible for such things as a good harvest or a fine summer; but there are many things on which the policy of the Government always has a direct bearing. The increases, for instance, in the deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank in Ireland and of the Irish exports show that the people of the country are not now so much under the dominion of the Irish National League. The farmers of Ireland are now turning their attention more to their own proper avocations and less to political agitation. That is a result of strong, firm, and just government. There is another fact of still greater importance which I do not recollect having been quoted in the debate. £610,000 has been advanced during the last year out of the Imperial Exchequer in the form of loans to public works in Ireland: in other words, the credit of the British taxpayer has been pledged to the extent of £610,000 for the benefit of the Irish people. How much of that money would have been expended supposing Ireland had got a Home Rule Parliament? Here is a direct and substantial benefit which she derives by her present partnership with the United Kingdom, and which I venture to say beats the record of any other country in the world. The subject of local government in Ireland has been alluded to this evening. I think we shall all accept the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a most complete refutation of the attack made

by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian regarding the delay in the extension of local government to Ireland. Personally I shall, whenever the time comes, support an extension to Ireland of the same measure of local government that has been extended to England, and is being extended to Scotland provided only that security is given for the proper protection of the loyal minority in Ulster. Firmly believing that the Unionist Party is as ready to grant a large measure of local government to Ireland as it is to do anything else which can tend to the welfare of the country, I shall to-night gladly support the Government by my vote.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, E.), on rising, was interrupted by an hon. Member directing the Speaker's attention to the number of Members present. The House having been counted and 40 Members being present, the hon. Member proceeded: The Amendment which is before us for discussion comes very aptly in the paragraph in the Address we are asked to adopt, thanking Her Majesty for proposed measures for amending the constitution of the various tribunals which have special jurisdiction over real property in Ireland, and for developing the material resources of that country. Her Majesty's Government seem to think that attention to the claims of real property in Ireland, and measures for developing the material resources of the country in aid of real property, comprise the full duty of the Government. To this point the Amendment aptly calls attention, declaring the present system of administration harsh, oppressive, and unjust. This declaration, in my opinion, is applicable to the entire system of administration in Ireland since the Union, and it is treating the Amendment in that sense I propose to say a few words. If we had been from the period of the Union governed by English laws administered in the English fashion, and in that spirit which centuries of freedom have impressed upon the judiciary of this country and upon all the offices of Government, at any rate for the last half-century—if the laws had been applied in this way to Ireland, then I can assure the House the material grounds we have for discontent in Ireland would have been much less, if they existed at all. I do not say that other grounds of discontent and arguments in favour of national aspirations would disappear; but undoubtedly, if English administration, as we know it in this country—if the Judges had administered English laws in Ireland as they are administered in England—we certainly would have had much less reason for discontent in our country. But the law which is administered in Ireland is neither Irish nor English; its administration is worse than Russian. If we had had the opportunity of passing our laws for our country in our own way, without also having the power to administer them, or even without having them administered somewhat in sympathy with our people, I do not believe the grant of legislative power would be of any service to us, or worth any considerable struggle to obtain. It is not the want of legislation, but the want of sympathy in the administration of laws, that we have to complain of in Ireland. I have frequently talked with gentlemen who believe they have the right by birth to govern, and who have a habit of talking of us as "the natives," including the vast majority of the people and the race from which I spring. It is in this spirit of class power, as expressed in that word, the laws are administered, administered as they would be by the dormant faction in a colony in ruling a territory forcibly occupied. We are ruled exactly as those people are ruled whose country is overrun by a Foreign Power. The whole Administration is "run" for them and their families; the whole spirit of the laws is imbued with this prejudice, and they are carried out in deference to the wishes of a class. This I defy anyone acquainted with the administration of the law in Ireland to dispute. We are practically really governed by the agents of the Orange Society. What votes are they that support Her Majesty's Government in Ireland? Where is the Government able to get a single Member returned but in those parts of Ireland where the influence of the Orange Society is paramount? What do we see here? We have two Members professing to be Ulster Liberal Members who owe their return as much to the support of the Orange Society as hon. Members opposite. In all vicissitudes of Government, in every change of Administration, the pervading influence in Dublin Castle is Orangeism, and in that spirit

is the administration carried out, be the Government Tory or Liberal. When these specially exceptional Criminal Laws are passed, when special powers are given to the Executive, no wonder that this House rings with the just complaints of how our people suffer; no wonder that debates arise, springing out of ferocious maladministration of the Coercion Act. But this is not the point upon which I desire to trouble the House. I do not think I could possibly point with anything like adequate force to my own experience of the administration of the Act, and I think the House and the country have had sufficient acquaintance with this from the various instances brought forward. So far as the administration of the Crimes Act is concerned I do not propose to touch it, but I do propose to call attention to the administration of ordinary law, the law we lawyers in our innocence take from English text-books as the Common Law of the land. In the administration of this I wish to call attention, as theoretically professing to be the same in either country. I can show some instances that will make Englishmen wonder how any remnant of respect for law and order can remain in Ireland. We have, of course, the Habeas Corpus Act, and we have also the Act this House passed for preventing the execution of processes of law on Sunday. We have also the same Statute with England that protects a minister while going to and coming from Divine Service. All these are the same for each country on the Statute Book, written in the same way, and our justices and our police are pretty well on a parallel with your justices and your police. But how has been the administration in regard to one of the most respected, most deservedly beloved clergymen in Ireland? Going about his daily duties, living in his house, he was liable at any moment to arrest, and the arrest might have been effected with no more annoyance than the opening of a window; for I will not concede that the Coercion Act is a thing to be feared and evaded. Father M'Fadden was summoned to be tried under the Coercion Act; and, thinking as he thought, and as we think, he properly refused to obey the summons, leaving the authorities to enforce his attendance. But he remained in his house or went about his priestly duties, visiting the sick and conducting Divine worship on Sundays. This was the extent to which the Rev. James M'Fadden acted in violation of the law of the land. What are the facts with regard to his arrest? How is it that with the two Statutes I have mentioned—against execution of legal process on Sunday, and for the protection of a clergyman coming from Divine Service—orders were given to arrest this worthy man on that one day of the week, deliberately wiping your feet on the Statute? No doubt, technically, you may say this was not a civil process—it was a warrant to enforce appearance in Court. Well, we all know that practically it is a civil process, because all that is done is to bring a man before the Court; and technically, perhaps, you are right; but how about the spirit in which the Act is administered? How is it that the legislative object shown in the Act of allowing a man to proceed unmolested going or coming from the celebration of Divine Service was disregarded? Then the actual law is that, even on criminal process, it is impossible to arrest except for certain offences mentioned in the Act, and not including the offence of Father M'Fadden. Undoubtedly, when the Acts of Charles II. in England and William III. in Ireland were passed, nobody had in view such a law as the Coercion Act of 1887. This is an example—a perfect example—of the manner in which, in my constant experience, authorities in Ireland trample upon the most sacred principles of the law in our country. What object—what possible good—was there in making the arrest on Sunday? The authorities knew that Father M'Fadden would continue his professional duties, and at any time they might have gone to his house and arrested him without difficulty. No; on the day and at a time when there was especially likely to be a display of affection from his faithful people, he was arrested, and we know and deplore the consequences. In regard to that, occupying the position I do towards the reverend defendant, it would be unbecoming in me to speak here. I only touch on the fact of the arrest as he was coming from service; that the authorities thought fit to execute a process of law on a priest in the middle of his congregation on Sunday. Much more than this arises; more than

this will turn up in reference to the harsh method of arrest; but as that, however, is another part of the case to be discussed in relation to the charges hanging over the defendant, I do not propose to touch it. All we know is that the Chief Secretary says there was an error in judgment on the part of the officer in charge of the police. I should say that it was not through any mistake of any officer at all, but through the instructions given to execute the warrant on the Sunday, that an officer of police was killed. It is fortunate that no other deaths occurred. At any rate, the action was taken under circumstances certain to create provocation. It is not an unusual thing in any State or country for a similar thing to occur, but I never heard in all my reading that when in the execution of his duty an officer was unfortunately killed by assault or resistance of combined parties, I never heard of an instance of the Habeas Corpus Act being suspended, and a whole district being occupied by military, every house searched, and 40 or 50 people arrested without warrant, not a single information sworn. This is the administration of law under the present *régime*. The Amendment declares the administration to be harsh, oppressive, and unjust, and what else can it be said to be? I beg the House to remember that it does not refer to the Coercion Act or any exceptional law, but to the ordinary law of the land. Father M'Fadden, who on that occasion was arrested and brought to gaol to stand his trial for a particular offence, by some ingenuity for which the authorities in Ireland are remarkable, was charged with complicity in a murder—or, as hon. Gentlemen opposite say, with being "morally responsible." Well, what happens then? Father M'Fadden is a clergyman, occupying in the minds of the people of Ireland a great and honourable position, and also standing high in the estimation of a great many people in England. This clergyman, whilst still in custody, without having information laid against him, finds that the original charge is withdrawn, and has handed to him by a constable a notice declaring that he has to appear on a different charge altogether. The Crown say they arrested Father M'Fadden, but certainly no formal arrest took place. This happened a week after the occurrence, and after a coroner's inquest had been held concerning the death of the police inspector, after, I suppose, the name of the rev. gentleman had been mentioned and a verdict had been returned to the effect that the wounds were inflicted upon the man who was murdered by some person or persons unknown. There might at that time have been someone to pledge his oath that he suspected the Rev. James M'Fadden of having had something to do with the death of the inspector. But nothing of the kind happens. Father M'Fadden is brought up in Court, and no one will swear that he suspects him; but, without more ado, two removable justices of the peace remand the rev. gentleman for eight days, a constable stating that he believed that between that day and the day to which the case is remanded he will be able to obtain some evidence. When the remand day comes, however, a police sergeant gives evidence that totally acquits Father M'Fadden, and the constable, who swore on the former occasion that he expected to be able to give evidence, does not come forward. A fortnight passes, further inquiry is made, and there is another remand. Still there is no information laid to the effect that anyone suspects Father M'Fadden. After that, 15 or 20 persons are arrested and are brought before a sergeant of police with whom, unfortunately, Father M'Fadden has had some discussion—for be it known that in Ireland prisoners can be brought before a police sergeant, who, if he thinks they are persons of good character, may dismiss them. In Ireland such is the law that a sergeant of police may exercise the powers of a Justice of the Peace. In the case to which I am referring, the sergeant allowed the men to go free, as if he were a county justice. The whole procedure of justice in Ireland is in a state of confusion, for, besides the powers given to the police, the magistrates not only assume the attitude of prosecuting counsel, but they even aid and make suggestions to counsel for the prosecution. Then there is a great abuse of the power of search. We read in English law books that searches for documents are by some Judges declared to be totally illegal, if carried out at night and in the absence of the accused party, except under the

most extraordinary circumstances. Well, what happened in the case of the Rev. James M'Fadden, against whom no one could be found to say, "I suspect him"? A warrant is issued at night and handed out at a time when it is discovered that Father M'Fadden's sister and housekeeper are away at the police barracks, endeavouring to obtain an interview with him. There is no one in the house when the search is made for the rev. gentleman's papers; therefore, all his private documents, it is fair to assume, are ransacked—and it is well known that Father M'Fadden has been in correspondence with the political Party on this side of the House. The search is made at night in total violation of the spirit of the law. In this matter we might, I think, take a lesson from France in administering our English law, for I find that in the action taken by the French Government against the League of Patriots, when the authorities were making their search for documents, they required the Members of the League to be present. In Ireland, however, the thing is done in this way. An official bursts into the presence of his chief with the announcement, "Miss M'Fadden is now with her brother at the barracks." Instantly the word goes forth that a search is to be made, the police take to their cars and rush down to Father M'Fadden's house and ransack his papers, and when Miss M'Fadden returns she meets the police on the threshold who say to her, "Oh, we have just taken one or two letters; good morning." There is little confidence to be reposed in the letters and documents obtained by the Government from their agents in Ireland as evidence against Nationalists. We have seen what a dismal failure the last move of the Government has been in relation to letters and correspondence. But we do not know what use may be made of letters found at Father M'Fadden's house, and here is where the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) comes in. One of the letters alleged to have been taken was a letter from another priest. That priest has now been arrested under the Coercion Act. The Crown will have to show that the law gives this power of domiciliary visit. But, whether it does or not, who will justify such action? I have been careful to abstain from saying whether, by any legal quibble or in any other way, there is any possibility of bringing home to my friend, Father M'Fadden—for I am proud to proclaim him my friend—any complicity in the murder of the police inspector. On that the rev. gentleman is ready to take his trial. But with regard to the poor people who are being raided and subjected to martial law, and on whom the baton and bayonet are being constantly used, I contend that the state of things is such that some such Amendment as this is absolutely necessary. I declare that the Habeas Corpus Act is distinctly at an end in County Donegal; the public rights are at an end. The county is filled with military from one end to the other. Because the Government have been baulked, and because of the desire of Orangemen to insult the Catholics, everything possible in the way of stretching the law has been practised. These things have burnt themselves into the souls of hundreds of thousands of people in Ulster; they will never forget the action of the Crown in Donegal. What is the object of that action I leave the House to determine. Whether it is for the purpose of dragooning the people, and in that way bringing about what is called "the material prosperity of Ireland"—namely, the payment of rent—I do not know; but I do say it is an instance of the Orange colour and Orange spirit and Orange feeling with which English law has been administered in Ireland—spirit and feeling which have brought all law into contempt.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Dublin, College Green): During the course of this debate much has been said as to the treatment accorded to political prisoners in Ireland. It is very natural that a good deal should be said on the subject, because it is a subject in relation to which the Irish people feel very keenly. Well, Sir, I myself have had the honour to be sent to prison under the provisions of the Crimes Act. I do not, however, whine about my treatment, nor do I want to pose as a political martyr. I was treated as a first-class misdemeanant, but then I was not tried by one of the removable gang of Irish Magistrates, and consequently I was not subjected to the treatment which has been inflicted on some of my friends. I desire, however, to mention a fact which

I have never mentioned before. The 18th rule of the Prison Code entitles first-class misdemeanants to carry on their ordinary trade, calling, or avocation, if not inconsistent with prison discipline. Under this rule Mr. E. D. Gray, when confined in Richmond Prison, Dublin, and Mr. Stead and Mr. Yates, when confined in Holloway Prison, London, were enabled, while in prison, to carry on to a certain extent the business of their respective journals. But, by a dirty trick, I was cheated by the Prisons Board and by the Chief Secretary out of the privilege, or rather right, to which I was entitled. After I had been four days in Richmond Prison, I was removed to another prison 60 miles from Dublin, and consequently was unable to assist in carrying on the business of my newspaper. I charge the Chief Secretary and the Prisons Board with having, by a mean and paltry trick, deprived me of a right given to me by the prison rules. The Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) said last night that the question of Ulster is a very serious one and will have to be considered. This is not the only occasion on which the right hon. Gentleman has attempted the task of educating the Tory Party up to his own views and sentiments on this Irish Question. but I think he is dealing with very dull scholars in so attempting. I noticed last night that during the whole of that portion of his speech his observations were received with a funereal silence by Her Majesty's Government. One of the difficulties he alleged to stand in the way of an Irish Legislature was this of Ulster. I deny the right of the right hon. Gentleman to speak of Ulster as he spoke of it yesterday, and I trust this House will understand—I am sure the majority of the Members of this House all understand—how false and how hollow is the pretence that Liberal Unionists or Tory Gentlemen have any substance in their allegations or arguments when they speak of Ulster being opposed to the national claims and national aspirations of the Irish people. They speak Sir, for only a portion of Ulster—for only a corner of Ulster—for only two counties of Ulster, or very little more than that, and I think we should put an end to the sham and fraud of using the name of Ulster against the demand of the Irish people for the restoration of their legislative liberty. Reference has been made to the alarming speech made in the House by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson). It was of course expected that both the House and the country would be alarmed at the terrible picture the hon. and gallant Gentleman brought before them of 50,000 men rising in arms in obedience to his summons, and taking the field forthwith as soon as ever there is a near prospect of the concession of Home Rule to Ireland. Where the hon. and gallant Gentleman gets his 50,000 I do not know, except it be that he makes his calculation on a system that may not be altogether unknown to some hon. Members of this House, inasmuch as many of them, probably, have heard before now of the famous work of a distinguished writer, the title of which is "The Tremendous Adventures of Major Goliath O'Gahagan." O'Gahagan was counting up the forces at his disposal for the defence of a besieged city in India. He counted his garrison in this way:—"Soldiers (infantry and artillery), 40; Chaplains, 2; surgeon, 1; O'Gahagan, 1,000." I think it must be on the same system that the calculation of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh is based. The hon. and gallant Gentleman counts himself as 49,000, and he leaves the remaining 1,000 to be made up from the Orangemen of Ulster. What does it mean when the hon. and gallant Member talks of bringing 50,000 men into the field against Home Rule? It means bringing them into the field against the troops of the Sovereign of this Realm! But, still, it will be a splendid sight to see the gallant Colonel take the field, and will remind one of the lines descriptive of another great hero—

> "To noble danger he conducts the way,
> His great example all his troops obey,
> Before the front the Major sternly rides,
> With such an air as Mars to battle strides,
> Propitious heaven must sure a hero save,
> Like Paris handsome, and like Hector brave."

But it is not only in Ireland that the name and appearance of the hon. and gallant Member strikes terror, for I read that at a meeting over which he presided, one of the speakers, the Rev. T. Ellis, Grand Chaplain of the Orange Order, at

a demonstration at Armagh on the 12th July, 1886, mentioned "that the blood rushed to Gladstone's forehead whenever Brother Saunderson got up to speak." That was said in the presence of the hon. and gallant Member, who did not deny the soft impeachment. Well, Sir, but while he threatens that he will take the field and head the rebel forces in Ireland under certain conditions—that is if the Act be passed by the Houses of Parliament and assented to by the Sovereign of these Realms—he at another time and in another mood presents a different appearance. In a speech delivered in this House on June 25, 1888, he said he did not understand how people could resist a measure when once it had become law. However much they disliked it, they could only proceed to get it repealed by Constitutional means. In the meantime they were bound to obey it. How can the hon. and gallant Member reconcile these conflicting sentiments? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in his speech in this House last night, said no Parliament had any right to transfer the allegiance of any portion of Her Majesty's subjects to another Power. But there is in this case no question of transferring allegiance. The allegiance of all Irishmen would rest, after the restoration of an Irish Parliament, just where it rests at present. The allegiance of Irishmen, Englishmen, and Scotchmen is due to the Throne, to the Sovereign of these Realms and to the Acts of Parliament which have been passed, and there will be no disturbance of that allegiance under an Irish Legislature. We hear a good deal said about Irishmen born under the rule of the British Parliament, and that no one has a right to transfer his allegiance elsewhere. But what about the Act of Union? The Irishmen of that day were born to the possession of an Irish Parliament, which had existed in that country for hundreds of years. Was their allegiance transferred by the passing of the Act of Union? Did they rise in rebellion and call out 50 or 100,000 men to take the field? Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland allege that under the present system of administration, that country is thriving and prospering, and that happiness, peace, law and order, and loyalty have been restored to the country. I deny each and every one of these statements. I say that the country is not prospering, but that it is declining in every element. I say that the administration of the law and the law itself in that country are not calculated to produce content, or any increase of loyalty and goodwill among the people. I say that whatever improvement there is in Ireland in the way of peace and quiet is due to far different causes than those alleged by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The decline in the material condition of the country cannot be denied. We get figures about the Savings Bank deposits in Ireland. I do not wonder if there is some increase in the amount of deposits, considering the sums of money that the Government and the *Times* newspaper have been squandering. I have no doubt that some of the *Times'* money is to be found in the Savings Banks; money which they have paid to emergency men, spies, and informers—the necessary tools of the Government under the present system. But there are more important elements than these to think of when we are considering the question of the condition of the country. I have here a few figures taken from an authentic source—an Irish official directory—the reliability of which will not be questioned by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I find that the population of Ireland between the years 1841 and 1845 declined by 3,274,000; in the years 1885-6, it declined 136,500. and in 1886-7, it declined 59,108, and that process is going on still. Well, but some of the letter writers, private secretaries and other friends of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, have informed us of the glorious fact that, although the population has declined, there is a greater number of cows in the country than there was a few years ago. That is a great element of strength, honour, and prosperity. Cows count for something: they have a certain value; Irishmen and women have none at all, so that if cows increase, no matter how the population decreases, it is a thing to be boasted of. In no other country in the world would any such conclusion be put forward. People fly from the country! Of course they fly with love and affec-

tionate memories in their hearts of the system of law prevailing—a system which would not give them a chance of living, thriving, and prospering in their own land, but which sends them away to the furthermost ends of the earth as hewers of wood and drawers of water. Little wonder then, when they are able to earn some money and to save some, that, to their honour and glory be it told, they send their savings home to the old country—to the Leaders of the Irish people—to help them to carry on a movement in Ireland which is intended to put an end to this disgraceful and miserable condition of things, to end a condition of affairs which banishes the people in thousands, year after year, and makes those who remain at home unhappy and miserable. In every other country of the world I know of—except, perhaps, some of the Turkish Provinces—the people are increasing in numbers, and in wealth and strength. But in Ireland it is thought to be sufficient if the number of cows, horses, and pigs grows; it matters not that the population diminishes. Quoting from the same authority, I find that the number of inhabited houses has declined. Between 1841 and 1861 the diminution was 333,683; between 1861 and 1871 it was 33,776; and between 1871 and 1881 it was 57,272. We are told that many of these were mud cabins, and that they were houses unfit for human habitation. No doubt of it; and if after they were thrown down the people went to live in better houses, there would be cause for satisfaction. But they did not; they had instead to fly the country; and therein lies a good deal of the trouble which has come to both the Irish and the English nations. I find, too, that pauperism has increased in the country. In the year 1885 to 1886 the increase in the number of Irish paupers was 40,422, and in the next year it was 27,103. This is a very sad and serious condition of things. There are now as many police and soldiers in Ireland as when the population was twice what it is at present, and taxation has increased while the population has declined. There are many reasons why the state of Ireland should be more peaceful. The agrarian strain has been decreased, principally by the Plan of Campaign, and many settlements have been brought about by fear of the Plan of Campaign. The number of evicted people in Ireland is, of course, limited. If the people are to be utterly cleared out of the land, there will of course be no evictions and no crime or outrage; and that seems to be the condition of things some of our rulers are seeking to bring about in Ireland. The great cause of the decline of crime, outrage, boycotting, and other such proceedings in Ireland is that the Irish people have learnt that their time of suffering is limited and cannot last long, because the English people in their millions have pledged themselves to stand by them, and will, at the very first opportunity, put an end to the miserable state of things which produces crime and outrage, dissatisfaction and disloyalty, and which produces such creatures as Pigott and the rest of the *Times'* witnesses. Aye, Sir, this order of things, which produces plots and conspiracies and illegalities and consequent punishment and suffering, we shall see end, and the British people will end it when they get a chance, and when they will be allowed to choose between the alternatives of Lord Salisbury's twenty years of firm and resolute government, and giving the Irish people the means of thriving and prospering in their own land, and becoming loyal members of the British Empire. The life of the policy of Coercion is limited; it cannot now last long. We look to the future with hope and confidence, and it is because these sentiments are in the hearts of the Irish people that peace, good order, and tranquillity now exist. Hon. and learned Gentlemen opposite may sneer at this, but it is in vain. They know as well as I do that the English people are a nobler and braver people than they choose to represent them. The hearts of the masses of the people have been filled with indignation by the conduct of the Government towards the Irish people, by the imprisonment of men for no treasonable or seditious practice, but who are fighting for the high and holy purpose of bettering the fortunes of their own people, without in the slightest degree impairing or injuring any imperial interest.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I think any comment of mine can only detract from the value of the personal evidence laid before the House by the two hon. Members who have just spoken. I

shall therefore proceed to state my views on the question before the House without dealing with those facts which have been advanced by those hon. Members. Before the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham interposed in this debate, I had supposed that we were considering the administration of the Coercion Act by Her Majesty's Government. I shall have a word or two to say presently about the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman; but in the meantime I wish to state the views which influence me in supporting the Amendment. To begin with, I have no hesitation in disclaiming many of the opinions and sympathies which have been imputed to us by Gentlemen sitting on the other side of this House. I intend to make no personal attack on the Chief Secretary; I do not think that that is necessary to our case, and I think also that the whole Government and the whole Party, and the voters of this country who have supported the Government, are responsible for this policy, and not merely the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. Neither do I stand here to defend crime, or to defend lawlessness or riot in any shape or form. I am glad to hear it stated by hon. Members below the Gangway who have spoken that they do not claim any special treatment whatever, either for imprisoned Members of Parliament or for priests. I do not say that the offences for which these men have been convicted are political offences. There has been a controversy on that question. I do not think it has come to anything much, but even if they were political offences I do not see that it makes much difference. But my arraignment of the Government and the reasons for which I shall feel compelled to vote for the Amendment are mainly three. I charge the Government, in the first place, with wanton, capricious, and unnecessary enforcement of the Criminal Law. I charge them, in the second place, with enforcing the law by means of, and by the use of, tribunals which are unconstitutional in status and incompetent in fact. And, in the third place, I say that, when they have dragged their prisoners before these tribunals and have convicted them there, they have been guilty of inflicting capricious and brutal forms of punishment. Now, as to the charge of unnecessary and wanton enforcement of the Criminal Law. We hear it said repeatedly on the other side of this House that the law must be enforced and obeyed. That is the parrot cry of everyone who defends the policy of the Government. Sir, there is no distinction to be drawn between us in this matter. It is quite true in regard to the Civil Law of the land that where the law has conferred civil rights upon a private citizen, it is the duty of the Executive Government of the day to see that the rights obtained by that citizen from a legal tribunal are enforced. But I deny that this proposition is true of the Criminal Law. In matters of criminal jurisdiction which the Government has initiated, it has, or ought to have, discretion. There are crimes and crimes, and life would be intolerable in this, or in any other country, if all the laws constituting crimes were to be enforced as a matter of course. The very first Private Bill on our list this Session is one brought in by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), proposing to repeal laws which enforce penalties in regard to matters of religion and conscience—laws such as those against blasphemy and Sunday trading, which you do not attempt to enforce even under the Coercion Act, and the enforcement of which was abandoned a considerable time ago. Let me point out the kind of crimes that come home more directly to hon. Members. I allude to cases constituting a form of libel against the House, over which this House, as a Court, possesses full jurisdiction. During the short time I have been a Member of this House many occasions have arisen when such offences have been committed, and you have declined to enforce the penalty. And in this very question of libel there are lurking crimes which may yet prove dangerous to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and as to which there is a criminal penalty attaching, not only to the utterance of the libel, but to those who, by themselves or their servants, merely sell the libels to the public. Do you propose to enforce the Criminal Law in these respects; and, if not, what is the value of your contention in defence of your Irish policy that the law must be enforced? It is, therefore, mere pedantry to talk of the enforcementof the Criminal

Law as a matter of course. There is, I believe at the present moment, on the Statute Book, a law which makes it a crime for any person to deny that the Long Parliament has not yet dissolved. That is a specimen of the extreme position you would have to adopt if you insisted on the enforcement of all kinds of Criminal Laws at all hazards. What I wish to point out is that the laws you do enforce under the Coercion Act belong to the category of unenforceable laws. I was glad to hear from the Solicitor General for Ireland the admission that conspiracy is the typical offence which may be prosecuted under the Coercion Act. We have only to look, as far as the imprisonment of hon. Members of this House is concerned, to the Reports made by the Resident Magistrates, to see that this is true. I have not the Return as to Mr. O'Brien, but I have examined that as to Mr. Carew, and I find that the crime of which he was convicted was that of conspiring with persons unknown to induce other persons unknown not to take farms from which tenants are or may be evicted. The great objection to this kind of conspiracy is that there is no criminality in it except the fact of combination. You have been enforcing the Criminal Law as conspiracy combination, which has for its object no criminal act; at all events, as far as Members of this House are concerned, the aim and object of the convictions has been to render criminal in combination that which would not be criminal in the individual. When the Coercion Act was before the House, the question of criminal conspiracy was certainly discussed, but I incline to think that justice was not done on a very important point. But my learned Friend the Member for Hackney (Sir C. Russell) did put on the Paper an Amendment which raised certain questions, but, somehow, by discussions anticipating them, the full force of our objections to that part of the Bill was dissipated. I do not think the House fully recognizes what is this conspiracy law which sanctions the enforcement of Coercion. The Common Law makes that criminal in two persons which is not criminal in one. A great jurist states that conspiracy was an art invented by lawyer-judges to fasten the colour of guilt upon the innocent; and I say that the Irish Judges have carried this definition to an extreme that would not have been admitted as good law when the Coercion Act was passed. Under this law a landlord may refuse to let a farm to a class of people, but a class may not combine to refuse to accept a farm from the landlord. Lord Salisbury may refuse to grant a site for a place of worship to Dissenters at Hatfield, but if the Dissenters at Hatfield combine to refuse to take a site from Lord Salisbury at Hatfield, they may be guilty of a criminal offence, for which they may be indicted at law. That was the law which was condemned long ago by the Commission which was appointed to draft the Criminal Code for this country. That Commission proposed to abolish conspiracy with certain exceptions. The conspiracies they recommended to be continued on the Statute Book were seditious conspiracies, conspiracies to pervert the course of justice, conspiracies to murder, conspiracies to defraud, conspiracies to prevent by force the collection of rates and taxes—nothing, mark you, about rents—they proposed to abolish all other forms of conspiracy, including the kind of conspiracy you are trying to enforce by your administration of the Coercion Act. Another distinguished jurist, Mr. Justice Stephen, says, referring to a case which came before the Irish Judges—

> "If it be correctly reported, and is good law, it would follow that two brothers having a sister about to contract a marriage, and who agreed to exclude her from their society, would, if by so doing they prevented the marriage, be guilty of an indictable conspiracy."

Mr. Justice Stephen adds—

> "This seems to me to show that the law is laid down far too hardly on the occasion in question."

This was written before the Coercion Act was passed, and, therefore, before conspiracy cases could come under it. I say, then, that in using this law to punish for conspiracy hon. Members who are only guilty by virtue of the common doctrine of conspiracy to which I have referred, you are taking an improper advantage of English legislation. The Report of the Commission on this subject has practically been accepted by all parties in this country. In attempting to set up again, as a crime, that which is no crime, but which has been

condemned by an authoritative Commission, and also by your own predecessors, you stand convicted of endeavouring to use against your own political opponents in Ireland a weapon which is a condemned instrument. My second objection to the course taken by the Government is one which applies to the Coercion Act itself rather than to its administration. I assert that in addition to the great mistake of making Common Law conspiracy a crime, you have resorted to unconstitutional and incompetent tribunals. I will not touch upon the character or antecedents of the Resident Magistrates; but I do wish to enter my protest against a judicial system which is the inversion of the true Constitutional theory. What is the theory of the Constitution on which you ought to rely? Is it that the Executive is the servant of the judiciary, or is the Resident Magistrate, who is the judiciary in Ireland, the servant of the Executive? Lastly, I would join in the protest made against the character of the punishments inflicted under this Act. The penalties imposed have carried with them indignities to which those who suffer the penalties have been improperly subjected. Such penalties could not be enforced for offences under a similar category—at all events, not for long—under European law. Take the Vaccination Act, offences against which would, if commonly proceeded against, as in cases under the Coercion Act, send to prison something like 160 Members of Parliament. Take the Public Worship Regulation Act: that, if administered as you administer the Coercion Act, would relegate to prison a number of Bishops and, possibly, 1,000 clergymen. These illustrations will, I think, convince you of the danger of giving countenance to any such administration of the law as obtains in the case of the Coercion Act. An hon. Member proposes to introduce an Eight Hours Bill; and suppose he invoked the Criminal Law against offences under that measure, should it become law, what would be the result? I do not like to contemplate what it would be; and I say this is the great danger of legislation which is likely to be proposed. I am aware that some Members of the House would enforce their views on matters of this sort at all hazards. I wish to allude to the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) last night, and of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-night. I think all of us on this side agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Local Government proposals to which he referred would meet with scant acceptance in this House. He also apparently favoured the scheme fathered by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney); but we are all agreed, I think, that Local Government in districts is not a remedy for Ireland, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer may be sure of a ready response to the criticism of the proposal which he made in the earlier part of the evening. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that local self-government in Ireland would be throttled in its cradle, because a political flavour would be given to it, and because local bodies would be used in furtherance of the very things that the Government are constituted to prevent. The Irish people are not going to give up those designs which he says he is sent here to prevent, and when he says that he will withhold local government until they do give them up, then, in effect, he has abandoned altogether the promises of local government which he and his Party proposed. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) endeavoured to draw Home Rule across the scent of the debate. He tried to draw from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) a statement of his plans of Home Rule. I never for one moment supposed that the right hon. Gentleman would be drawn in any such innocent fashion. I never for a moment supposed that he is to develop all his plans now, and that he is to do it at the demand of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who has no right whatever to talk about plans to us. The right hon. Gentleman has done me the distinguished honour of going down to my own constituency in Scotland. He declared there, if not here, in Glasgow, that he was one of the Liberal Leaders. He said, "We who, by your courtesy, are called the Leaders of the Liberal Party." It must have been a courteous assemblage of Liberals to have applied any such designation to the right hon. Gentleman. He said to a crowd of two thousand persons, mostly ladies, who paid for their places, as they would for the view of any other exhibition—[An hon.

MEMBER: "Well worth it."] Certainly well worth it—"There are the Radicals of the constituency." Now, the Radicals of the constituency were assembled in considerably larger numbers in close proximity to the place where the right hon. Gentleman was speaking. There were some 30,000 or 40,000 of them, and I have not heard that they applied any such title to the right hon. Gentleman as "Liberal Leader"; nor do I think that if in their hearts they regarded him as a Liberal Leader, they would have ended their meeting in the manner they did. I make these remarks about the right hon. Gentleman simply because there is no man in English politics who so consistently and persistently poses—I pause for another adverb—so unwarrantedly arrogates to himself the privileges of Leadership. The right hon. Gentleman is for ever talking of himself as the Leader. I well remember some years ago that he excused himself from the performance of the most important duties which a Member of this House can discharge—I mean that of attendance in Committee considering the estimates, by saying, "that no first-class Statesman ever condescended to do so." It is not the right hon. Gentleman who is entitled to ask what our plans are. Our Leaders, I have no doubt, will produce their plans under proper conditions and at the proper time, but certainly not at the demand of the right hon. Gentleman. Let me. We hear from the Unionists and from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that their main business is to protect the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. I was glad to hear to-night from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) the adoption of that principle quite as emphatically, and with a good deal more significance, than anything that could come from Liberal Unionists. My cardinal principles for the solution of this question are these—first of all, that we are going to maintain, at all hazards, the real and effective supremacy of this Imperial Parliament. Secondly, and in subordination to that, we are going to give to the people of Ireland a full and just measure of local or national self-government. I do not greatly care, so long as the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament is maintained, how large the measure of self-government may be. I do not know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer means the same thing as I mean; but by the supremacy of Parliament I mean the supremacy of this House over all the principalities and potentates, whether in Ireland or any other part of the Empire—the supremacy of this House over the Clerical Convention that sits under its shadow, over the other House of Parliament, and over the Throne; and, maintaining that supremacy, I think we may safely grant any measure of Home Rule that may be demanded by Representatives in this House. I unhesitatingly vote for the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

*MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): Mr. Speaker, if it were possible to look at this question from a purely Party point of view, I confess that I for one should think it a little ungracious on our part to invite the House to pass so severe a censure on the policy of the Chief Secretary. In the great struggle in which we have been engaged during the last three years I regard, and I suppose many on this side of the House regard, the right hon. Gentleman as our best friend and our most valuable ally. Many causes have contributed during that time, by the removal of misunderstandings, by the dispelling of prejudices, to incline the judgment of the people of Great Britain in the direction of Home Rule. But among those causes I am firmly convinced that none has been one-hundredth part so potent and so effective as the administration by the right hon. Gentleman of the exceptional powers which Parliament has placed in his hands. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has told the House—and I agree with him—that the responsibility for what is going on in Ireland does not rest upon the shoulders of the Chief Secretary alone—that it is shared and must be shared by every Member of the Cabinet. I go a great deal further, and I say that it ought to be and must be shared by every Member of the Unionist majority. But, Sir, just as there is a good way of doing good things, so also there is a bad way of doing bad things. There were, as we pointed out at the time, many

latent possibilities of evil in the Crimes Act, in the form in which it passed this House, but I for one am quite prepared to admit that if it had been carried out by the same hands and in the same spirit as previous legislation of a similar character, although it could have done very little good, it might surely have been made to do very little mischief. Coercion, Sir, has hitherto been regarded by English statesmen as a disagreeable duty, imposed perhaps by necessity, but to be accepted with reluctance, and exercised with temper, dignity, and tact. The right hon. Gentleman has changed all that. He resented the other night, with much indignation, charges of cynicism and brutality. I am not fond of using abusive epithets; but I think it very possible, indeed I am persuaded, that neither the right hon. Gentleman nor any of his Colleagues even now realize the deep-seated and wide-spread sentiment of repugnance which his methods of administration have inspired. But, Sir, though I am not going into the details of particular cases, I should like the House to bear with me for a few minutes while I sketch, in outline only, the picture of the right hon. Gentleman's administration as it presents itself, I am sure, to three-fourths of his own countrymen in Scotland, and, I believe, to at least one-half, and probably more than one-half of the people of England and Wales. The right hon. Gentleman was entrusted by Parliament with special powers for a special purpose. And what was that purpose? It was to put down crime. How has he used those powers? He has directed the main brunt of his prosecutions, not against moonlighters and outragemongers, but against some of the most blameless and universally respected of his political opponents. He has had them arrested at times and in places which seem to have been deliberately selected for the purpose of inflicting wanton indignity, and, at any rate, of suggesting to the minds of the people of Great Britain that the action of the Executive was dictated by political vindictiveness. He has had them tried on charges in support of which the vague and elastic Law of Conspiracy has been tortured to purposes for which it was never intended, and to which I do not hesitate to say in this country it never has been, and I trust to Heaven it never will be, applied. He has constituted for their trial tribunals of which I say deliberately, speaking with a full sense of responsibility and having carefully watched their proceedings, that in the short space of two years they have brought ridicule and contempt on the name of law in Ireland. And then, Sir, after sentence, when he has got them into prison, he has subjected them —men, by his own admission mistaken and misguided, if you please, but still the victims of a genuine if perverted enthusiasm—to the lot of the very commonest felons, declining to exercise in their favour the power of relaxation expressly given to him by Statute, and which he has himself used in a particular class of cases. While these things have been going on in Ireland, what has the right hon. Gentleman himself been doing? So far as the public are able to know, he has divided his time between making rollicking and roystering speeches, in which he has sharpened a very pretty wit on the alleged absurdities of men who could not reply to him, and writing or dictating letters which I venture to think will serve as models for all time of smart and flippant inaccuracy. Now, Sir, I do not say that this amounts to brutality or springs from cynicism. I am anxious not to say a word which would even seem to reflect on the right hon. Gentleman as a man. I wish to confine my charges entirely to his conduct in an official character. But this I do say, with full emphasis and assured conviction, that there is not a man among us whose heart is set on the attainment of Home Rule for Ireland who ought not to pray devoutly for the prolongation of the right hon. Gentleman's rule. But, notwithstanding the Chief Secretary's unconscious and unpremeditated services to our cause, the right hon. Member for Newcastle is perfectly justified in moving his Amendment, and we are bound to join with him in his protest and remonstrance. I have listened curiously in the course of this Debate to the apologies which have from time to time been offered by the right hon. Gentleman himself and by his colleagues on the Treasury Bench, and I have sought to discover what is the principle which has governed the

right hon. Gentleman's conduct. So far as I can make out, the sum and substance of the Chief Secretary's defence amounts to this—that in his judgment those who incite to crime ought to be dealt with as severely, both in the matter of prosecution and the matter of punishment, as those who perpetrate crime. Very good. So say all of us. In our judgment, as in the judgment of the right hon. Gentleman, the man who, whether for a political or any other object, instigates to the commission of crime, and the man who either recklessly or deliberately accepts and profits by and trades on the fruits of crime is every whit as guilty, and often a hundred times more guilty, than his poor, degraded, hunger-driven instruments. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman he will find on this side of the House unanimous and emphatic assent to that doctrine. We accept the right hon. Gentleman's doctrine, but where we differ from him is in its practical application. The Chief Secretary has had under lock and key during the last two years some 25 Members of this House, the great majority of whom have been prosecuted in respect of speeches which they have either made or published. It is quite true that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who has discovered that there are actually only 111 persons now in prison under the Crimes Act, is astounded, and even apparently a little shocked, at the moderation of the Chief Secretary. But it is sufficient that the offence of 20 out of those 25 Members of Parliament was either speaking or publishing a speech. The right hon. Gentleman told us that those Members of Parliament, by their speeches, have been producing boycotting, and, through boycotting, outrage and even assassination. That is a very serious statement for a Member of the Government to make on his official responsibility. It ought not to be made in this House unless evidence is forthcoming in support of it. And I challenge him or any Member of the Government who may follow in debate to produce in the case of any one of those 25 Members one single instance in which, directly or indirectly, proximately or remotely, but by a traceable and provable causal connection, any speech for which there has been a prosecution has been followed by outrage or assassination. That, Sir, is a fair challenge, and I trust that it will be met in the spirit in which it is made. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that a man who goes into a district where land-grabbing prevails and denounces the land-grabber, and advises the people to abstain from dealing with him, ought to be punished by the law. Under what law? I assert that by the law of England, which is also the law of Ireland, it is not a crime to resolve to abstain from dealing with a particular person and to act on that resolve. I assert further that it is not a crime for men to combine together to abstain from dealing with a particular person; it is not a crime to advise people so to combine. Such advice and such combination only become criminal when they are carried out by illegal means, such as compulsion or coercion, or when it can be shown that the combination does not spring from legitimate self-interest, and that its motive is personal malice, and its controlling object the ruin of the individual. Let hon. Members test the application of these principles in Mr. O'Brien's or 20 similar cases. Let us take Mr. O'Brien's case as a sample. What the Resident Magistrates do is this. It being proved before the magistrates that the defendant has advised combination to boycott, they presume, without a tittle of evidence, that the object of the combination is illegal, and that the means by which it is to be effected are illegal also. It is quite true that making speeches is not equally dangerous in all parts of Ireland. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh has not repudiated that speech of his which has been alluded to several times in this debate. That hon. and gallant Gentleman, speaking in that Alsatia, so far as the Crimes Act is concerned—the province of Ulster—asserted that, in a certain event, he would rise in arms and resist forcibly the decrees of an Irish Parliament. I am not very much alarmed at the picture which he draws of what he and his compatriots are going to do. We know how to appraise at their true value the noisy and vapid heroics of the Orange platform. The hon. Gentleman tells us he and his fellow-countrymen are going to die in the last ditch rather than submit to a Dublin Parliament; but history will re-

cord a very different story. It will tell how, not on the tented field, not by fire and sword, but under the gentle compulsion of 17½ years' purchase of the judicial rents, the heroic leaders of this devoted band of patriots stole quietly off from the post of honour and duty, in the direction of the Holyhead boat, their pockets well stuffed with the sovereigns of the British taxpayer. Sir, I only allude to the hon. Gentleman's speech for the purpose of making two observations upon it. In the first place, I was very much struck with the novel Constitutional doctrine which it elicited from the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who is certainly making rapid strides in political science. He laid it down that it was beyond the moral competence of an Imperial Parliament to create, against the will of a small minority, in any part of the Queen's dominions, a subordinate authority with delegated legislative powers. If Parliament does so, that minority has the right hon. Gentleman's sanction for resisting the law. This is the latest version of the gospel of law and order. But, Sir, there is another remark which I wish to make in reference to the hon. and gallant Member's speech. What a striking illustration the making of this speech is of the operation of that even-handed system of equity and justice which excites the enthusiastic admiration of the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees. A Member of this House may not go to Tipperary, which has been peculiarly free of late years from serious crime, and denounce, coupled with every warning against crime and outrage, that great outrage against the best interests of society in Ireland—the offence of land-grabbing—without exposing himself to the risks of prosecution, conviction, and imprisonment; but in Ulster another Member may, with absolute impunity, incite his fellow-countrymen to civil war, and announce and approve of alleged treasonable intentions on the part of men who have taken an oath to serve Her Majesty, and who wear her uniform. The Government say that their policy has been a great practical success —trade is reviving, prices are increasing, and even the seasons seem to have enlisted themselves in the service of the Union. Perhaps never before has there been heard from a Minister such a glowing proclamation of the beatitudes of coercion. I am not now concerned to inquire into the accuracy of these statements, but I cannot but suspect that if instead of immuring himself in Dublin Castle, the Chief Secretary for Ireland would take an excursion to Donegal, Gweedore, Western Galway, or Mayo, he might see sights that would ruffle his complacent optimism. But, accepting for the purpose of argument this rose-coloured view, I ask the right hon. Gentleman why have not the Government the courage to act upon their opinions? It is alleged by the Unionists that Irish discontent and unrest of Ireland, so far as they are real, arise from economical and agrarian causes; and that, so far as they are political, they are artificial, and are kept alive by conspiracy and intimidations. Assume it to be so; why, here is a splendid opportunity for testing the justice of that opinion. On the one hand, material causes of discontent, if not removed, are in abeyance, and the artificial causes have been put down by resolution administration. In these circumstances, I venture to suggest to the hon. and gallant Member for Armagh, that instead of expressing his readiness to die in the last ditch, he should render his cause a more practial service. Let him accept the Chiltern Hundreds and go to Galway, Kerry, or Clare, which we are told have been, by the beneficent operation of the right hon. Gentleman's policy, freed from distress, and delivered from the domination of the National League. No doubt some Nationalist Member will resign his seat to enable him to try the experiment, and he might thus have the distinction of becoming the first exponent in the House of the genuine opinion of the emancipated Irish democracy. I do not think that the hon. and gallant Gentleman will jump at that offer; and why not? Because he knows, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary knows, that though the Government may have succeeded by brute force, by straining the law, and by the employment of methods and agents which are dishonouring to the best traditions of English statemanship in putting down the organization of the people, yet they have not advanced one inch on the road of conciliating them and

winning their affections. That in our judgment is the goal, and the only goal, of a sound and a far-sighted statesmanship. It is because we believe that every step taken by the right hon. Gentleman only widens the gulf between the two countries that, in the interests of Union, no less than in the interests of liberty, we shall oppose his policy to the end.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker, I desire to support in a very words the Amendment on which we are shortly to divide. I agree with the Amendment that the system of government pursued in Ireland by the right hon. Gentleman and his instruments is unjust and oppressive to the Irish people; and I pray, with the concluding portion of the Amendment, that this system may give place to measures of conciliation which may truly cement the union between the two countries. I desire also, Sir, to express some words of sympathy for my Colleagues who have suffered, and are suffering, in Ireland by the unscrupulous means adopted by the right hon. Gentleman. I sympathize with my friends who have bravely counterworked the present Government in Ireland, and I believe that they will be richly rewarded in the near future by the victory which patient suffering always in the end wins over tyranny. The right hon. Gentleman sought to intimidate by the infliction of prison pains and penalties. He failed in that. His victims were not intimidated by suffering. He now seeks to degrade them. The association with ordinary criminals and all the other unnecessary incidents connected with the system of prison discipline in Ireland is an attempt to degrade them. My hon. friends have not been degraded either in their own opinion, in the opinion of their countrymen, or in the opinion of the people of England. It is the old story. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has run through the different grades. "Oh! give me power to imprison any man I please," said the late Mr. Forster, "and I am assured by those who know Ireland well that this movement will crumble away before me." Mr. Forster failed. The right hon. Gentleman thought that by adding to power of imprisonment at will the power also of inflicting these hardships and these degradations he could conquer the resistance of Ireland, but he also is finding out his mistake. He has been exceptionally fortunate. Ever since he came into Office the prices of produce have been steadily rising. If it had not been for the means he has used, I believe he would now see a fairly tranquil Ireland instead of a discontented one from the centre to the sea. Among the other successes of the right hon. Gentleman's Government, I suppose he will also claim, as sworn in the Commission Court the other day, the doubling in numbers during the period of his administration of the revolutionary society called the Clan-na-Gael. Well, Sir, it is useless for the Government to plead, as they have pleaded, that they have to administer the law and that the law does not permit them to alter the system of prison discipline. The law is as they make it. They refused us the right to suggest alterations in the law. They forced upon Parliament the rule of urgency under which we were prohibited from moving a clause directed to the very question of prison discipline. It is they and their majority who are responsible for this law, and they must stand or fall by the results of its working. I shall not stop now to remind the House of one of the means by which they obtained this urgency, of the conspiracy which assisted them on the very night of the Second Reading to steal away the liberties of Ireland. They will have, then, to stand or fall by this law as it stands. It is useless for them now to whine, as some of them are

doing, and to say that indeed they would like to see some distinction made between the treatment of political prisoners and others. But it is owing to them and to their action that this distinction was not made two years ago. We are entitled, and the country is entitled, to hold them responsible for the results—results which compel a man like Mr. William O'Brien, and like Mr. Carew, and like my friend Mr. William Redmond, to lie on the plank bed, and to associate with common and vile criminals for political offences committed in Ireland. You wish now, you say, to alter the law and to secure this difference of treatment, and I suppose you claim credit because you have placed Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Carew in hospital, and given them back their clothes. But we do not claim this treatment as exceptional to these gentlemen. On the contrary, we think less of them and of their sufferings than we do of those of the humblest men in our ranks. And why? Because those humbler men have not the same chances in their fight against your system. You cannot kill Mr. O'Brien; you dare not kill him. You cannot torture Mr. Carew to death; you dare not do so. How about the others? How about the obscurer men, men who are not Members of Parliament, men like John Mandeville, who were done to death in carrying out this system, and necessarily done to death if you must carry out the system? How about Larkin, a young man convicted of a political offence, just as much a political offence as the offences committed by Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Carew? It is for these men that we have the most sympathy, because the fight for them is not an even, not an equal one. It is in the interests of these men—everyday men—that we claim an alteration of the law, and an alteration of the prison treatment. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman intends to alter the law; but he has placed himself in the position which he occupies to-night. He has said that there shall be no distinction between the treatment of political prisoners and persons convicted of any other offence in Ireland. Therefore he is obliged to carry out this law to its bitter end. But it is not consistent to give Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Carew this exceptional treatment if he does not extend the same treatment to the others. Let me say a word to the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), who has treated us to some of his fire-eating qualities with which we are so familiar. He has told us of the 50,000 armed men he is going to put into the field. I venture to think that if he ever succeeds in putting them into the field they will not remain very long there, and I will tell him why. There is no example in history of a determined rebellion by a people or by a large section of a people unless they were spurred on to it—incited to it—by great oppression, suffering, and injustice. The hon. and gallant Gentleman thinks that he will be able to incite the Orangemen of the North of Ireland into a determined and stubborn resistance not against the rest of Ireland merely, but against the Parliament and against England and Scotland, when no oppression has been inflicted upon them, when they will have no grievances to complain of, when they will not have been touched or injured in any respect. I say of the hon. and gallant Gentleman that he is simply led away by his own enthusiasm, and that he will find it is impossible to create such a movement out of such unpromising material. I say of the hon. and gallant Gentleman that if he is able to persuade this House to remove the grievances of Ireland, and to continue to meet the wants and require-

ments of the Irish people; and if, after a long series of years, he is able to prove to the people of Ireland that this House is really willing and able to meet the necessities of that country, then I believe that he would banish discontent in Ireland. Now, which does the hon. and gallant Gentleman supposed to be the greater—the capacity and the will for rebellion of the Orangemen of the North, or of the Fenian of the South, the East, and the West of Ireland? Surely his own friends must be the most loyal or the least disloyal; surely he would claim that for them. And does he not see the hopelessness of the task which he puts before himself when he vouches for the coming disloyalty of the Orangemen of Ulster, untouched as they would be by any oppression, and without any of those inducements to rebellion and revolt which must always exist under the conditions I have referred to. Before I sit down I wish to say that we have every confidence that in the near future the people of this country will see that our cause is a just one; and that it is possible to arrange such a system as will permit Ireland to have the power of dealing with all those matters which concern herself, and herself alone, without the slightest shadow of danger or risk to the interests of the Empire and of this country. All I ask is, that you, on your side, should be willing to consider and deal with this question as if it were an open question; that you should consider how far you can give to Ireland the right to legislate for herself with safety to your own greater, and undoubtedly more overpowering, influence. It is legitimate and right that we, being the smaller country, should endeavour to conciliate you in every possible manner, and yield to you, and agree to such safeguards as you may think necessary or desirable for the security of your own interests. We have always been anxious and willing to do so, and we are willing to do so still. I am convinced that our people, knowing that England and Scotland and Wales have for the first time turned the ear of reason to the solution of this question, will steadily resist every incitement to disorder, to turbulence, and to crime; and that they will hold fast in the true way pointed out to them by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in 1885, until he gets that chance, which we hope and believe will be a near one, both for the sake of Ireland and for the sake of England, of again touching the great heart of his countrymen.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham): I am sure we all must earnestly hope that the advice which the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) has just given will be followed. If it had been given and followed in the past, we should not now be engaged in the present discussion of alleged cases of hardship under the Crimes Act. Unfortunately there has too often in the past appeared a close connection—I will not say a criminal connection—between the action of political agitators in Ireland and the subsequent outrages which have unfortunately taken place. The hon. Gentleman has complained of the Act which is now being administered having been unduly hurried through the House. Such a complaint comes strangely from the hon. Gentleman, who certainly did very little to control the action of his followers during the 20 days that were devoted to the Committee stage of the Bill, and whose conduct led to such a waste of time as to necessitate the course that was at last taken to terminate their proceedings. The chief grievance, however, that has been

brought forward in this debate—time does not allow me to go into the minor charges—is the alleged improper and cruel treatment of prisoners convicted under the Crimes Act. The point has apparently been abandoned that they are political prisoners. The righ hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) said he would not attempt to give a definition of a political offender, and the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) have both said, "We claim no special privileges for Members of Parliament; we claim no privilege for the political opponent; we claim that all men convicted under the Crimes Act should have exceptional treatment." And we have in the course of the debate——

MR. PARNELL: I said that anyone convicted of a political offence should be treated as a political prisoner.

*MR. MATTHEWS: But the hon. Member did not define a political offence, and what I assert is that none of the offences of which the Gentlemen in question have been convicted can properly be described as political offences. At this time of night (11.25) I am not going into a long disquisition as to political offences, but I think I am right in saying that offences which are not against the Government, but rather against individuals and private property, cannot be regarded as political offences, and that, as has been admitted by the hon. Member for Fife (Mr. Asquith), those who incite to the commission of offences are as guilty as those who commit them. It is said that there is degradation in the ordinary prison treatment, but where are you to draw the line? Is it not much the same degradation to be in the custody of gaolers at all, or is the line only crossed when it comes to the question of clothes? Such distinctions cannot be maintained. If the law is broken in obedience to a higher moral or Divine law, there can be no degradation at all in the punishment that follows upon conviction. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) has referred to the cases of Cobbett, Hobhouse' and O'Connell, in which in years past exceptional treatment was extended. But he cannot have forgotten that it was precisely on account of these cases, and the possibility of providing different treatment in each case, that the law was altered to its present form. The whole tendency of modern legislation has been to substitute a rigid and uniform system of prison treatment for the latitude that previously existed. I can state to the House with great confidence that in England I have absolutely no power of dispensation. The right hon. Gentleman must know perfectly well that since the Act of 1865 I have no power, nor have the Prison Board any power, to dispense with any of the incidents of prison life, whether they be harsh or degrading or not. I do not know whether in Irish prisons there is more latitude or not—I dare say there is not—but be it observed that the reason for imposing the present conditions is a most sound and excellent one. The theory of punishment in our modern legislation is that it ought to be well-defined; that all its incidents ought to be defined by law; and that the sentence of the Judge should carry certain and definite consequences. Nothing could be more fatal than to leave to the Executive Government or with the Chief Secretary for Ireland a discretion either to relax punishment or to make it more severe. In the discharge of my own duty I have often come across cases in which it is most painful to inflict the punishment prescribed. Take the case, for instance, of the anti-vaccinators, those who, foolishly mistaken as I believe them to be, set themselves in opposition to the Vaccination Law—conscientious men perhaps, but breakers of the law; or take the members of the Salvation

Army, who, in the discharge of what they consider their duty, obstruct the highway and create a disturbance in a quiet country town. The Court sentences these offenders, and the ordinary prison treatment accompanies the sentence. Can it be maintained that the Executive should depart from the ordinary rules of discipline and allow relaxation in individual and particular cases for which Parliament has declared the proper prison discipline, because, forsooth! you sympathize with this and that offender, and because you think they were influenced by motives not wholly bad, base, or degrading? Such is not the policy of Parliament pursued since 1865 in England; on the contrary, the Legislature has condemned such exceptions. When unmeasured attacks are made upon the Chief Secretary in this respect he is only doing what in England I am bound to do—giving effect to the sentence in all particulars the law requires without interference in favour of any man, sympathize though I may with the offender undergoing punishment. All those who desire that penal legislation should be certain, uniform, withdrawn from the caprice or control of the Executive officer, and committed to a judicial minister of the law, must approve the system. I should like now to take up the challenge of the hon. Member for Fife and the hon. Member for Cork, and prove that the men of culture who have been sentenced did not deserve any special treatment. Let me take the case of Mr. E. Harrington, and when I speak of him I do not imply anything except what appears on the record. I invite the attention of the hon. and learned Member for Fife to this, inasmuch as he has called for evidence of cause and effect as between the speech and the outrages in the county. Let the hon. Gentleman remember what the condition of things in Kerry was. You had an active local branch of the National League denouncing persons by name, among whom were two men named Foran and Fitzmaurice. Foran was murdered in January, 1888, and Fitzmaurice in July, 1888. You had consequent upon these crimes a rigorous enforcement of the Crimes Act in Kerry. The local branch of the National League was—I will not say entirely suppressed, but certainly weakened—the publication of its proceedings at meetings in the newspapers was suspended for a time, and the country quieted down. But all of a sudden, in the course of last autumn, in consequence, I believe, of an order grounded upon Mr. O'Brien's opinion that "it was necessary to show Balfour that his troubles in Ireland were only beginning," the county again became disturbed. I should like to know what this phrase implied? Are "Balfour's troubles in Ireland" created by prosperity, good conduct, peace, order, the regular payment of rents, or the discharge of social obligations? It became most important, in view of Mr. O'Brien, that Balfour should be shown that his troubles were only beginning, and, in pursuance of that advice, you had the proceedings of the local branch of the National League published in Kerry, in the place where the blood of Foran and Fitzmaurice was scarcely dry, and upon the estate of Lord Kenmare it was sought to establish the Plan of Campaign. This is what was published—

> "Despite the Coercion Act, and after the Coercion Act expires, for ever and ever after, until the Irish Question is settled, land-grabbing shall not show its head in Kerry, or in any part of Ireland."

Then the speaker, by way of advice to the branch, says—

> "If an obnoxious man, time after time, comes into conflict with you, you should go for him, and see whether he or you is to be victorious."

Do not let me be misunderstood. I will not assert—I am not entitled to assert—that the intention of the speaker was to lead to the events that followed. I will not insinuate what I am not prepared to say outright, but I do say that these words were published in a place which was like a gunpowder magazine, in a place where experience had shown the effect of such denunciation as was employed. What were the consequences? Outrages had well-nigh ceased. The hon. Member for South Tyrone has mentioned the declining figures, but in this place outrages occurred in October, November, and December, some 12 or 13 in number. I will give a sample of

one, of moonlighting on January 1st of this year. Moonlighters entered nine town-lands in the district. In one case the inhabitant of the house ran out by the back door with whatever money he had; the door was forced in, and the children were told to warn their father to join the Plan of Campaign and clear away his cattle from certain lands. A dog lying on the floor was shot, two panes of glass and the pottery on the table were broken, and the moonlighters went off and repeated the scene at other houses in the district. The hon. and learned Member for Fife is exacting in his ideas of proof, and I do not say that it will come up to his exalted view of cause and effect as showing connection between the speech and crime. I do not know that I can satisfy him; but, to ordinary minds of less refined subtlety than that of the hon. and learned Member, it seems a curious thing that the denunciations of 1888 should have been followed by a couple of murders, and that the denunciations at the end of the year should be succeeded by an immediate outbreak of outrages in the district where they had declined. I do not envy the courage of the man who published the account of the proceedings of the branch of the League. Knowing what had been the history of the district, I say that any tribunal, any Judge who did trace a connection between the published proceedings of the Land League and the crimes which followed —a connection which the hon. Member for Fife is too subtle to see—can hardly be said to have drawn a very rash conclusion. But these are not isolated cases. It is not in one part only of Ireland that these things have happened, but in several. I could show that in county after county, in consequence of this appeal, this summons to arms—if I may call it so—of Mr. O'Brien, speaker after speaker made speeches, not against the Government, not against their administration of the law, not recommending exclusive dealing, not of this legitimate character —if I may use the word—but speeches of the character I have just referred to; speeches in which outrages were hinted at if not advised, and the use of violent means plainly indicated or suggested as the best to be employed. Can any reasonable man say, judging by the nature of such speeches in the circumstances under which they were delivered, that if they were not calculated to produce outrages, they were likely to result in what was almost advised in set terms. We have been told by more than one speaker that we have brought the law into contempt, and that forsooth by our conduct and action this hatred of law has arisen in Ireland. I do not know who is most responsible for that contempt of law, but the Opposition and its Leaders seem to me to have lent powerful aid in that direction. I heard with astonishment I could hardly conceal this evening the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian attack Resident Magistrates, not merely as a class, but by name without proof——

MR. GLADSTONE: They have been often referred to.

*THE HOME SECRETARY: The right hon. Gentleman, from his place here and from the height of his great position, attacked by name three judicial officers, one of whom was appointed by himself, and who was certified by his own Lord Lieutenant to have competent legal knowledge to administer the Act of 1882. The right hon. Gentleman is quite aware of the fact. I am not informing him for the first time. I have not heard in the course of debate any allegation made against Mr. Gardiner—one of the three gentlemen mentioned—["Killeagh."] I have heard no allegation made against him in the House; but the right hon. Gentleman has not thought it unworthy of his great position to name this gentleman as one of those who conspire—I suppose with Her Majesty's Government—to bring law into contempt in Ireland; and he

refers to the feelings of the English people—as he says—as well as the Irish people, becoming somewhat less warm and earnest on the side of law and order than they used to be. Why, if the example set by the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues were generally followed, all government in the country would rapidly become impossible. It would be a matter deeply to be regretted if the great Liberal Party should by speeches and demeanour in this House bring things to such a pass that Liberalism should become almost synonymous with law-breaking. The right hon. Gentleman and his followers are constantly suggesting to us that we should not carry into operation the Act of 1887, and the right hon. Member for Newcastle taunted the Conservative Party with fraud on the constituencies. But we are in touch with our constituencies, and are not afraid of their verdict. We believe that they appreciate the reasons that made it necessary to bring in a Coercion Act which they and we deplore, and hoped to avoid. We believe they are conscious of the extent of the failure of the machinery of justice in Ireland, how juries were intimidated and the law of the land subordinated to the law of the League. We believe our constituents perfectly appreciate that we were more than justified in proposing the Crimes Act. After the fullest and most abundant discussion in the face of the country, Parliament passed the Act by overwhelming majorities, and we shall not be discouraged from loyally carrying its provisions into execution, so long as it stands on the Statute Book, and we believe it necessary for the purposes for which it was passed. Sir, we have been abundantly convinced that the result has justified that Act. The hon. Member for East Mayo said that it was the soothing speeches of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and the operation of the Plan of Campaign which have led to the diminution of crime. Why, the Plan of Campaign is in itself one of the greatest and most mischievous of the crimes that are committed in Ireland, and as for the soothing effect of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian's sympathies, those sympathies began in 1886. [*Cries of dissent.*] I thought that the first manifestation of that sympathy was the promulgation of the Home Rule scheme of 1886. But it seems that was not so; it seems there must have been some other message that has not reached our ears, that has had a soothing, calming effect in Ireland, but certainly the public message we all know of was that of 1886. But in the course of 1886 crime sprang up and increased, and it was not till the Crimes Act had come into operation that a diminution in outrages began. The firm administration of the law has always been successful in Ireland. I do not see that it has ever failed. In 1870 the perpetration of 1,329 outrages led to the passing of the "Protection of Person and Property Act;" as I think it was called, in 1871. Under that Act the number of outrages fell to 373. In 1882, when the right hon. Gentleman had not yet demonstrated his soothing sympathies, under a repressive Act, outrages in like manner fell from 4,439 to 870, and in 1888 they had fallen to 650 from 1,056 in 1886. Therefore, you have the firm administration of the Criminal Law entirely justifying the assertion made more than once that it has been the cause of diminution of crime. When the hon. and learned Member for Fife tells us that we are regarded with execration by the Irish people, and the hon. Member for East Mayo declares that sentiment is universal, I do not believe it. I never shall believe that the 5000 people relieved from boycotting detest us for our firm administration of the Criminal Law. I do not believe that

the wretched peasants on the hill sides, who were subjected to nightly visitors who placed them in terror of their lives, detest us or our administration of the law. I do not believe that Norah Fitzmaurice hates us. I do not believe that any man who wishes to live honestly, who believes that social order is the corner stone of national prosperity, hates us. The Irish people have sense enough to see that we are not actuated by the vile and odious motives hon. Members are fond of imputing to the Government, and will speedily realize that our only object is by firmness and determination to be strictly just and restore the country to happiness and prosperity.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): The right hon. Gentleman in the course of his speech twitted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian with first indicating his Irish sympathies by the Home Rule Bill of 1886. This came with a very bad grace from the Home Secretary, who, as we all know, supported Home Rule when he was returned as Member for Dungarvan. He stood as the Fenian candidate for that borough in 1868.

*THE HOME SECRETARY: That is not a fact; the statement is absolutely incorrect. I was not a Fenian candidate in 1868, and never did anything of the kind.

MR. W. REDMOMD: I withdraw the statement that the right hon. Gentleman was a Fenian candidate. I believe he was not actually a Fenian, but certainly he received the support of the Fenian Party and the support of the newspapers then owned by Mr. Richard Pigott. At any rate it is perfectly competent for Members of the House who feel sufficient interest in the subject to look up the files of newspapers for that period, to find the declarations of the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the Dungarvan Election, which were thoroughly satisfactory to the Home Rule Party, and led that Party to give him warm support, because those declarations showed distinctly he was in favour of self-government for Ireland. Now that the sometime Home Rule Member has become an English Tory Minister and has cut his connection with Ireland, we and the Irish people pay very little attention to what he says on the subject.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes 339; Noes 260: Majority 79—(Division List, No. 1.)

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

Debate adjourned till Monday next.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE (REGULATION OF MEETINGS) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday 20th March, read, and discharged.—Bill withdrawn.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 8.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 12.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 4th March, 1889.

The Earl of Gainsborough took the Oath.

SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT (METROPOLIS) BILL.

A Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis. Presented (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*). Read 1ª (No. 13.)

POOR LAW RELIEF.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

*THE EARL OF STRAFFORD, in rising to ask whether it is intended to move for the reappointment of the Select Committee which sat during last Session on Poor Law Relief, said: My Lords, Probably it will be in the recollection of your Lordships that a Committee was appointed early in last Session on the Motion of the noble Earl the late Viceroy of Ireland, and the terms of the Reference to the Committee were rather wide. The Committee was appointed—

"To inquire as to the various powers now in possession of Poor Law Guardians, and their adequacy to cope with distress that may from time to time exist in the Metropolis and other populous places; and also as to the expediency of concerted action between the Poor Law Authorities and voluntary agencies for the relief of distress."

The Committee was presided over by the noble Earl the late Secretary of State for India, and that noble Lord drew up a most interesting and elaborate Report. The Committee sat for 18 days and examined 45 witnesses, but in the time at their disposal they were only able to deal with that part of the reference which related to the Metropolis, and could not go into the wide subjects covered by the reference as to "other populous places." In their Report the Committee express the advisability of their being re-appointed in order that in a subsequent Session of Parliament they might continue their inquiries still further. My Lords, it is something like twenty-one years since any Committee of your Lordships' House inquired into the working of the Poor Laws. I think it was in the Session of 1867, what was called a Poor Law Relief Bill was referred to a Committee, and they reported upon it; but since that time no stock has been taken of the way in which the Poor Law has been worked. Considering that it is on the efficiency with which the Poor Law is administered in England and Wales that the well-being and comfort of the poorer classes very much depend, I think that every now and then we should have an inquiry into its working, and as the Committee last year only dealt with London and not with "other populous places," I trust the Government will either consent to the re-appointment of the old Committee or the appointment of a new one. If the Government do not see their way to do this, I would ask my noble Friend whether, if the Committee is moved for by the noble Earl who moved for it last year, the Government will give its assent?

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: In addition to the Question appearing on the paper, the noble Earl asks me whether if any noble Lord moves for this Committee the Government will assent to the Motion. First of all dealing with the Question on the paper, I may say at once that it is not the in-

tention of the Government to move the reappointment of the Committee. The Committee of last year was not appointed on the initiation of the Government, it was assented to by the Government upon the Motion of the noble Earl sitting on the front Bench opposite (the Earl of Aberdeen). With regard to the further Questions put by the noble Earl, if there seems to be any general disposition either on the part of the Members of the Committee who served last year or the House generally to renew the inquiry, the Government will not oppose it, any more than they did last year; that is, they will take up the same attitude in regard to the matter as was taken last year. The reason, I think, why the inquiry was mainly confined to the Metropolis by the Committee last year was that the Question was more particularly dealt with by the noble Earl (the Earl of Aberdeen) in moving for the Committee. There was, as some of your Lordships will remember, a considerable amount of agitation going on during the winter of last year with regard to the distress among the unemployed, and no doubt as regards the Metropolis some pressure was put upon the Government to consent to the inquiry. The order of Reference did include "other populous places," but, when the Committee appointed had gone through a considerable part of its work, it became evident that if the inquiry were to be extended to populous districts outside the Metropolis it would be impossible to report during the last Session. It was thought to be of some importance to get the Report so far as it concerned the Metropolis, in order that matters agitating the public mind might be set at rest. As far as the Government is concerned, it is entirely for the House to say whether the Committee should be re-appointed; but if it is it will be well for the Metropolis to be excluded from the scope of inquiry, so that the same ground may not be gone over again. If the inquiry is moved for, I think it will not be unfair to ask that some specific grievance, or some special subject of inquiry, should be indicated, because the House at large will probably not regard the fact that no similar inquiry had been instituted for 20 years as sufficient ground for a fresh inquiry. I can only say with regard to the inquiry of last year, which was a most exhaustive one so far as it went, that it is a matter for congratulation that no serious maladministration was brought to light.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: My Lords, it is the fact that the Government did assent to the appointment of the Committee last year, although it was with some reluctance. Before moving for the re-appointment of the Committee, I should like to consult with the noble Lord who presided over the Committee, and other noble Lords; but my impression is that their opinion will be, if not altogether unanimously in favour of the re-appointment of the Committee, at any rate sufficient to justify me, or some other noble Lord, in moving its re-appointment. It occurs to me, my Lords, that among the advantages which will be gained by that inquiry and by the able Report which the Chairman of the Committee drew up in this; that it was made clear that certain powers which were vested in the Board of Guardians had become inoperative, or at any rate they were not resorted to, and in fact the Boards of Guardians in many cases seemed unaware of what their powers were. I think that shows that the continuation of the Inquiry as regards other districts than those dealt with last Session would be highly desirable.

GIBRALTAR—PROPOSED DOCK ACCOMMODATION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government whether it had been decided to proceed with the construction of a dock at Gibraltar, and, if it had been, how soon the work would be commenced, said: My Lords, this question was put by me some two or three months ago, during last Session, and on that occasion received the satisfactory answer from the Admiralty that the matter was under consideration. I hope that the answer of my noble Friend to-day will be to the same effect.

LORD ELPHINSTONE: My Lords, having regard to the interest that my noble Friend takes in this question, I am not at all surprised that he returns again to the Question he put to me in August last, and repeated in December. In my reply on August 3rd, I stated there were five schemes before the

Admiralty. Two of them only were accompanied by any details, and pending the receipt of details of the other three schemes, the matter remained in abeyance. In December I was unable to be present; but my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Knutsford) answered for me in effect that the matter was still under the consideration of the Admiralty. Since that, we have had a scheme submitted, by which it was proposed that about 40 acres of water should be enclosed, that coal wharves should be built, and that two docks should be constructed—one for the Imperial Navy, and the other for the mercantile marine. There are objections, and serious objections, to that scheme, which I do not think it is necessary for me to enter into at present. The Director of Works has lately been at Gibraltar, and has gone over the whole of the schemes that have been submitted. The Admiralty have had under consideration the whole of the various schemes, and have given a general approval to one, which is for the construction of a dock on the site of the new mole, and the reservation of this site has been asked for on behalf of the Navy. The Admiralty are fully aware of the desirability of having a dock at Gibraltar, and are sensible of the inconveniences which have been felt for the want of dock accommodation there; but in face of what are considered more pressing Imperial necessities it is not proposed that any immediate steps be taken for the construction of docks.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I hope the Admiralty will consider a little longer before they come to a decision on this important subject. I always regret very much when I find myself at variance with the noble Lord (Lord Elphinstone), especially on questions where professional knowledge enters so very largely; but I must say, from all that I have ever heard, and from all the study that I have been able to give to the subject, it does seem to me that the construction of a Naval dock at Gibraltar would be a matter the desirability of which is certainly more than questionable. It would mean an expense which is to be deprecated at a moment when so much money is needed for similar purposes, and from the military point of view, in time of war, at all events, the construction of a dock at Gibraltar is absolutely useless. I say useless for two reasons. In the first place, a complete change has come over the whole system of artillery. The cannon now used are of enormous range, twice, at least, as powerful as those of former years; and from the heights of the Spanish hills heavy guns could render a dock at Gibraltar absolutely untenable. The question has been gone into over and over again; and it is incontrovertible that if Spain were Great Britain's enemy it would be impossible to hold the docks at Gibraltar. In the second place, it is to be remembered that there exist a very good dock with arsenal and workshops at Plymouth, and another very good dock with arsenal, workshop, and accessories at Malta, both of which places are practically only three days' sail from Gibraltar. My Lords, what is really needed at Gibraltar and, indeed, at all our coaling stations (and about this there is no controversy) is a greater number of modern guns. At present there are at Gibraltar some 400 or 500 absolutely obsolete guns. I believe the Admiralty are taking steps to send out to Gibraltar some new guns, and in a few months there will be a considerable accession of strength to the place. The whole question, as my noble Friend knows, is a very large one; involving many others. There is the question of armaments, and the scarcely less difficult question of garrison, and all sorts of questions which have been created or largely altered by steam communication, which renders a place like Gibralter quite different to what it used to be. There is the question of communication with India through the Mediterranean and by the Suez Canal, or by the alternative route of the Cape of Good Hope. For all these reasons, and a variety of others which I need not go into, I trust that the Admirality will think twice and thrice before they commit themselves upon a question so large as that which is involved in the construction of a dock at Gibraltar, which it is probable would after all be of very little practical utility.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 4th March, 1889.

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to Kilrush and Cappoquin, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland and Mr. Jackson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 145.]

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (ARREST OF DR. TANNER.)

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received the following letter relating to the arrest of Dr. Tanner, a Member of this House :—

March 2nd, 1889.

Sir,

I have the honour to acquaint you that I have received a communication from the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis, informing me that Dr. Charles K. D. Tanner, a Member of the House of Commons, was arrested at an early hour this morning, within the Metropolitan Police District, under a Warrant granted by H. F. Considine, Esq., a Justice of the Peace for the County of Tipperary, for offences therein specified against the provisions of "The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887," and duly backed by me on February 20th last, for the purpose of being executed within my jurisdiction.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. VAUGHAN.
A Metropolitan Police Magistrate.

The Right Hon. the Speaker,
House of Commons.

QUESTIONS.

POSTAGE RATES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General whether he was aware that a letter posted in France for New Caledonia was only charged 25 centimes, or 2½d., and from England to New Caledonia the charge was 4d. per letter, whereas a letter to Australia by the same route, 1,000 miles nearer England, was charged 6d.; whether he was aware the ocean postage from Germany to Australia was 20 pfennings, or less than 2½d. per letter, and from Germany to the savage island of New Guinea only the same charge, whereas the charge from England to Australia by the all-sea route was 4d. per letter; and, whether he intended to make a further reduction in the postage to Australia.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University), The hon. Member seems to have forgotten that I answered in the affirmative an identical question raised by him in March, 1887. But I may qualify my previous answer by stating what the hon. Member probably knows, that a letter may now be sent to Australia by long sea route for a postage of 4d.

CHURCH PROPERTY AND REVENUES.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked the under Secretary for the Home Department whether he was now in a position to state when the Return, ordered on the 20th of June 1887, of the property and revenues of the Church of England and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners under the several heads specified in the Address moved on that day, would be presented to the House.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): I fear that I can give no hope that it will be possible to present this Return to Parliament in a proper form this Session, even if it were possible that it might be presented in a more or less imperfect and unrevised form. I would suggest that the hon. Member should repeat this question later in the Session, and in the meantime communicate with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who, as I am informed, are willing to give him particulars as to the precise state to which the work has advanced.

MR. CHANNING further asked whether the hon. Gentleman had ascertained whether it would be possible to issue a separate Return as to the Metropolitan area?

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I will make inquiry.

LIGHTHOUSES IN THE HEBRIDES.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate whether he was aware that from the want of a sufficient number of lighthouses in the Hebrides, grave risks and impediments to navigation occurred; whether representations had been frequently made to the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, as to the necessity for Lighthouses at Rudha Hunish (the northernmost part of Skye), and at Kylekhea, in the Sound of Sleat; and whether Government would take steps to remove these dangers?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (replying for The LORD ADVOCATE) said: I have communicated with the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, who inform me that they cannot trace any application having been made to them for a light at Rudha Hunish, which, in their opinion, is not a suitable position for a lighthouse. One application has been made to them for the lighting of Kyle Rhea—namely, in 1884, and the Commissioners have decided that, while such a light would be useful to the trade navigating the Sound, there were other points on the coasts of Scotland and its Islands where lights and seamarks were more urgently required, and they accordingly are not at present prepared to recommend this expenditure.

THE "CONGRESS CATECHISM" IN INDIA.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich) (for Sir EDWARD WATKIN, Hythe): Asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether the Government is aware that a publication called the "Congress Catechism" has been printed, in the twelve languages of India, and circulated by millions amongst the Hindu people, by an Association calling itself the "National Congress;" whether he is aware that, in form of dialogue between a mulvi and a peasant, that "Catechism" contains the following:—

"Rambaksh: But surely you don't want us to join together and fight with the Sirkar? If we killed all the Europeans how should we get along? All would be anarchy (ghader), as I remember when I was young. You cannot mean this.

"Molvi Fariduddin: God forbid! This would be a sin. Why should we kill the poor Europeans? Many of them are really good men; most of them mean at any rate to do right. They are ignorant, no doubt, of the rights of most matters concerning us; they blunder, they cause us misery, but they do it from ignorance, from an ignorance unavoidable under the system which they work on, and which, even did they wish it, they could not change without our help. Besides, though we of the new generation are growing up able to assist them and do much for the country, the whole of us put together have not yet sufficient experience and self-reliance to manage the administration entirely without their help. Kill the Europeans? No, Rambaksh, let us say, rather, God bless all of them (and there are many such) who feel kindly towards us in their hearts, and according to their lights mean well towards us, and God forgive those amongst them (and let us hope they are not many) who dislike and despise us, and care nothing what becomes of us."

And whether the Government intend to take steps to punish the authors and distributors of these papers.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): May I ask the hon. Gentleman before he replies, whether he is aware that the words copied in the question are not to be found in the "Congress Catechism" at all, but that they are in a separate and distinct publication, entitled "Conversations," and whether this very conversation is not given in the correspondence between Mr. A. O. Hume and Sir Auckland Colvin?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) is quite correct, and he shows that he is a better authority in regard to the "Congress Catechism" than the hon. Baronet who gave notice of the Question. The hon. Member is quite correct in saying that the dialogue is not in the "Catechism," but in one of two separate pamphlets which the late Viceroy described as being of a very questionable character. The Secretary of State is aware that publications have been circulated in India, among which are the "Congress Catechism," and the "Conversations" referred to by the hon. Member, which are described by the late Viceroy as "animated by a very questionable spirit, and manifestly intended to excite the hatred of the people against the public servants of the Crown." But the Secretary of State is disposed to direct the efforts of Government to the better education rather than to the punishment of the authors and distributors of these papers.

MR. BRADLAUGH: May I ask whether the late Viceroy has not in express terms declared his belief in the desire of the National Congress to work loyally in bringing about internal reforms?

*SIR J. GORST: If the hon. Gentleman depends upon any particular words he must give me notice of the Question. On behalf of the Secretary of State, I may say that the Government are not desirous of joining in an indiscriminate condemnation of the Congress.

SUGAR BOUNTIES.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table official Returns showing, as stated by him in Greenock on 1st November, 1888, that sugar bounties cost France £3,380,000; Germany £3,238,484; Austria £1,036,667; Belgium £813,000; Holland £309,655; or, if he is not in possession of official Returns, whether he will state on what authority these figures are given, and, if the authority is from official sources, he will indicate references to them?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): The figures quoted by the hon. Gentleman, and used by me at Greenock, were derived from the recognised organ of the German sugar manufacturers, *Die Deutsche Zuckerindustrie*, and, as far as I know, their general accuracy is not disputed by the Powers concerned. As regards France, if the right hon. Gentleman will consult the *Journal Officiel*, he will will find that in the debate on the sugar question in the Senate, on the 17th of June, 1888, the then Minister of Finance, M. Tirard—who now occupies the same post in the present Administration—stated that the amount of the sugar bounties in France in recent years had fluctuated between 70 and 90 millions of francs. The latter sum —equal to £3,650,000—is £300,000 more than the amount I quoted in the House the other night.

THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA.

MR. ALEX. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have made any inquiry, or obtained any information, concerning the murder of Mr. Brooks, an English missionary, which it was reported took place at M'Kanga, a few miles from the East African Coast, on the 21st of January; and whether, in view of the fact that numerous missionaries are still peacefully engaged in their work and enjoying the confidence of the Native tribes beyond the disturbed coast-line, Her Majesty's Government have taken any steps to explain to the chiefs and people of the disturbed districts that England is not to be regarded by the Natives of the East African Coast as a belligerent Power, and especially that she has no responsibility for the methods which have been pursued by the officers of the German East African Company.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I should like to ask him if it is not the fact that the Imperial British East African Company has, by its prudent conduct and enterprise, established harmonious and peaceful relations with all the Native tribes with which it has come in contact?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): The information received by Her Majesty's Government respecting the murder of Mr. Brooks is precisely of the same character as that which has appeared in the newspapers. The unfortunate gentleman lost his life through incautiously approaching the disturbed coast, in spite of warnings as to the danger of so doing. The remaining missionaries in the interior will, it is to be hoped, be warned by Mr. Brooks's fate, and will not venture into such districts. This would insure their safety better than an intimation of the character suggested, the success of which, if it were expedient to make it, would be very doubtful. In answer to my hon. Friend, I am glad to be able to say that the relations of the British East Africa Company have been of the character which he describes. They have shown great prudence in their proceedings, and have, for the most part, avoided all disputes with the natives.

FATAL ACCIDENT CAUSED BY MAILBAGS.

MR. ESSLEMONT asked the Postmaster General whether his attention had been called to the sad death of a passenger between Aberdeen and London, near Carlisle, alleged to have been caused by mailbags; and, if so, what steps, if any, had been taken to prevent a recurrence of any similar fatality?

MR. RAIKES: I heard with much regret of the lamentable accident referred to by the hon. Member, which, I believe, is the only one of the kind that has ever happened, and I immediately caused special inquiry to be made by an experienced officer, who was sent to the neighbourhood for the purpose. It appears that the unfortunate passenger, who had been taken ill in the train, was leaning as far as possible out of the window of her carriage, and thus came in contact with the pouch suspended from the standard of the apparatus used for exchanging mailbags. Although the apparatus, which is of the usual description, was accurately adjusted and in perfect working order, and there can be no doubt that the sad fatality was purely accidental, yet I will not fail to pursue the inquiry in order to secure for the public all possible precautions against accident.

IRELAND—THE PRISONER TRACY.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will state under what order of a Court of Law Thomas Tracy was removed from Belfast Gaol to Millbank Prison, where he still remains; for what purpose Tracy was previously removed from Castlebar to Belfast Gaol; when, and on what charge, Tracy was convicted, and what sentence was passed upon him; whether, during his imprisonment in Belfast, he was daily supplied with dinners of the first quality, and also with beer or porter, and by whom same were supplied; whether the *Freeman's Journal* was sent him daily from a local police barrack; whether County Inspector Heard, and District Inspector Gibbons, or any other officer of police, paid several visits to him there, and saw him without the presence of a warder; whether he is aware that Tracy alleges these officers of police promised him his liberty if he would swear against an Irish Nationalist Member of Parliament, and a certain priest in connection with a murder in the West of Ireland; whether, on his refusal to swear what he knew to be false, Tracy was threatened with imprisonment for life; whether Head Constable Preston, or any other constable, told Tracy on his way to Belfast that he was wanted as a witness for the Parnell Commission, gave him money, and said that he would be visited in Belfast Gaol by gentlemen, who would tell him what he was wanted to swear; and whether, under the circumstances, he will grant an independent inquiry into these serious charges made by Tracy?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): 1. I am informed that the man referred to was brought over to England under an order from the Special Commission Court. 2. While this man was in Castlebar Prison it was publicly announced in a local Roman Catholic Chapel that he had turned informer, and there was also reliable information that he was being tampered with to prevent him from giving information. He was accordingly removed to Belfast. 3. He was committed to prison for 12 months on the 16th of August, 1888, in default of finding sureties to be of good behaviour, for having made use of threatening language towards one Patrick Connors. 4 and 5. I understand that he was treated like other bail prisoners. 6. County Inspector Head did not visit this man, but he was visited by County Inspector Milling and District Inspector Gibbons, both in Castlebar and Belfast Prisons, in consequence of the man's having previously disclosed important information with reference to serious crimes, which it was the duty of these officers to investigate. No warder was present.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): How did it happen that the solicitor to this man several times applied to the Irish Prisons Board to be allowed to see him and was refused, and is it true that access has been permitted to certain police officers transferred by the Government to the service of the *Times*? I also wish to know whether, in view of the grave allegations contained in the Question of my hon. Friend that this man was promised his liberty by certain police

officers if he would swear against an Irish Nationalist Member; that he was wanted as a witness for the Parnell Commission, and that he would be visited by a gentleman who would tell him what he was wanted to swear, and that on his refusal to swear he was threatened with imprisonment for life; the Chief Secretary will be content to allow the allegations to rest upon the denial of the persons incriminated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe these allegations to be untrue, but as the man is to appear before the Special Commission an opportunity will be afforded of ascertaining all the facts.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to say why the solicitor to the prisoner was refused admission to him, while free admission was given to the *Times* emissary?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware that such was the fact. There is no suggestion of the kind in the Question.

MR. M'CARTAN: The right hon. Gentleman did not answer paragraphs four and five of my question, namely, whether during Tracy's imprisonment in Belfast he was daily supplied with dinners of the first quality and also with beer or porter; by whom the same were supplied; and whether the *Freeman's Journal* was sent to him daily from a local police barracks?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did answer he right hon. Gentleman. I stated hat I understood from the report of the Prisons Board that the prisoner was treated like all other bail-prisoners.

THE CITY CHAMBERLAIN'S COURT.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Home Secretary whether the City Chamberlain had the right to sentence any City apprentice to 14 days' solitary confinement in the City bridewell for neglecting to carry out any order of his master; whether lately an apprentice was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment for a trivial offence, the evidence not being taken on oath; and whether the Government would bring in a measure to abolish this Court?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): The City Chamberlain informs me that he has an ancient customary jurisdiction in connection with the Mayor's Court to adjudicate on disputes between masters and apprentices. I beg to refer the hon. Member to the second Report of the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations on this subject (1837, No. 60, appendix, p. 100). The committal of an apprentice to the bridewell for misconduct is in accordance with the custom of the City, and provisions for his reception and treatment are made in a scheme for the management of the bridewell, approved by the Court of Chancery in 1860. In the particular case referred to, the apprentice was not sentenced to solitary confinement, and his offence was not a trivial one. He had been twice previously warned by the Chamberlain for his misconduct. Evidence is not taken on oath, but an apprentice is not imprisoned unless he admits the facts alleged against him, and only in cases of incorrigible conduct. I have reason to believe that the Chamberlain's Court is distinguished for its impartial administration and care of the rights of apprentices, and the Government do not propose to bring in a measure to abolish the Court.

POSTAGE OF PRINTED CIRCULARS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Postmaster-General whether it is the case that circulars and other printed matters open at both ends if in the third person are charged one half-penny, but if in the first person one penny; and, if so, on what grounds this differential rate is made.

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): There is, I think, some misapprehension on this subject. Circulars in identical terms, addressed to several persons, may be sent by book post at a postage of one halfpenny, whether in the first or in the third person; but no communications of the nature of a letter other than circulars are allowed to pass by book post, in whatever person they are expressed. Besides printed matter, accounts are permitted to pass by book post; but difficulty often arises from the senders printing or stamping on the accounts requests for payment, or other notes, which are clearly of the nature of letters. Impersonal statements as to the practices of a firm in regard to discount, interest, &c., are not objected to.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked whether it is the fact that a

postage rate of one penny is charged for printed circulars (open to inspection) issued by Friendly Societies to their members, because the amount of contributions due is inserted in writing; if trading firms are allowed to send invoices and bills to their customers, the amounts due being written in every case, for the halfpenny rate of postage; what was the reason for this different treatment; and, whether he will alter the regulations so as to give Friendly Societies the same advantages as traders.

SIR E. BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): May I ask whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman has been called to the fact that a Conference of delegates of Friendly Societies was held on Friday last, representing 1,965,000 members, and a capital of over £13,500,000; whether he is aware that the present system of charging one penny postage on Friendly Societies' circulars, containing particulars of arrears of members, and a request for payment, was on that occasion pronounced as unjust and unreasonable, and whether he will endeavour to come to an arrangement with the Friendly Societies' authorities on this question?

MR. RAIKES: Unless circular letters are in identical terms, they are liable to the letter rate of postage. Traders enjoy no privileges which are not allowed to Friendly Societies, and printed circulars from a trader to his customers asking for payments due (with the varying amounts inserted) would be charged letter postage. Invoices and statements of accounts are, however, allowed to be forwarded at the book post rate, and I would suggest that any Friendly Society in which the hon. Member is interested should do what some others do—*i.e.*, reduce their notices of subscriptions due to the form of accounts, in which case they are passed at the book post rate, circulars in identical terms either accompanying the accounts or not at the option of the Society. In reply to the question of my hon. Friend the Member for East Norfolk (Sir E. Birkbeck) my attention has been called to the meeting of the Conference, and I fully recognise the authority with which it pronounces an opinion. I endeavoured last year, when the Bill of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) was before the House to introduce some amendments into the law which might have met the wishes of these bodies, but the Bill was not discussed in the House nor was it finally approved by the Government. I shall be happy to confer with my hon. Friend and others interested in the matter, with a view to see how far a modification of the law can be introduced.

IRELAND—JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. M'CARTAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware of the dissatisfaction given in the Union of Kilkeel, county Down, by the alterations made by the Land Commission in the judicial rents for the year 1888; whether he is aware that the Judicial Rents in this Union have been increased where such Rents were fixed in 1884 or 1885; whether he is aware that this Union chiefly consists of mountainous land, and covers the poorest district in the county Down, and that the value of the crops for 1888 in Kilkeel Union is estimated at about one-half of those of the previous year, when substantial reductions were given; and whether he will give the particulars which influenced the Land Commission in arriving at the alterations published in their last Schedule?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that a small increase has been made for 1888 in the Judicial Rents fixed in the Union of Kilkeel, county Down, in 1884 and 1885, the increase in respect of each of these years being respectively 5¼d. and 3d. in the pound. As regards paragraph three, the hon. Member must be aware that the automatic alteration of Rents is based, not on yield, but on prices.

THE HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY.

MR. BRODIE HOARE (Hampstead) asked the Secretary of State for War, if there was any reason why the arms and military equipment of the Honourable Company should not be returned to the Regiment, so that it may be able to resume its Military exercises.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I have every hope that new regulations will be laid down very shortly for securing the military discipline of this ancient corps by

bringing it under the control of the War Office. As soon as this is done, and a Lieutenant-Colonel and Adjutant has been appointed, his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief will be prepared to direct the immediate re-issue of the arms.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. AINSLIE (Lancashire, N. Lonsdale) asked the President of the Board of Trade, whether it is competent for Railway Companies, in their classification of rates, under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," to vary the limitation Clause fixing the minimum distances chargeable on traffic.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE) Sir. MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol W.): Yes, Sir, they may propose such variations, but the decision will remain with the Board of Trade and Parliament.

FAIRS IN LONDON.

MR. MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich), asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the fact that a fair is, and has been for some time carried on upon a piece of ground situated between number 20 and number 22, Church Street, Camberwell, to the great loss, inconvenience, and annoyance of the tradesmen and residents generally in the neighbourhood; and whether, in view of such injury caused by the fair, he will instruct the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis to take immediate steps to put an end to it?

MR. J. R. KELLY (Camberwell, N.), had also on the paper the following question:—To ask the Secretary for the Home Department, whether he has received complaints as to the great loss and annoyance caused to tradesmen and ratepayers generally in Trafalgar Road, Old Kent Road, owing to the carrying on of the fair now held there; and, whether he will instruct the Commissioner of Police to proceed against the owner or occupier of the land upon which this fair has now been held for many months.

MR. MATTHEWS: I will answer this Question of the hon. Member for Dulwich, and that of my hon. Friend the Member for North Camberwell, at the same time. I received on Saturday last two communications alleging inconvenience caused by fairs at Camberwell and Old Kent Road. These I at once referred to the Commissioner of Police, who has not yet had time to make the necessary inquiries and to report to me on the subject.

IRELAND—MR. BRODRICK AND MR. PARNELL.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (for Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND) (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is correctly reported, when speaking at Blackburn in April, 1887, as having used the following words: "There was one subject on which their opponents were exceedingly blind. He meant the letter of Mr. Parnell, which appeared in the *Times*. He was not going to mince language about that letter, and he said it was Mr. Parnell's letter," and, if so, whether he is now prepared to withdraw this statement?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The hon. Member is aware that I answered a similar question on April 25, 1887, three days after the speech was made. I then explained that the expression I used was, "I call it Mr. Parnell's letter," and I gave my reasons for so calling it in the absence of any action to disprove it in a Court of law. As the allegation put forward by the *Times* has not been substantiated, I have no hesitation in withdrawing the expression which, as it was not well-founded, I regret to have used.

IRELAND—THE CASE OF MR. DUNLEARY.

MR. O'KEEFFE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why Mr. Dunleary, journalist, Ennis, county Clare, who was sentenced to three months' imprisonment by Mr. Hoddes, R.M., for, as the official announcement of his sentence recorded on his cell door announces, "abusing a policeman," has been removed last Monday from Limerick, his county district prison, to Tullamore Gaol; and, whether there are at present over 40 empty cells in Limerick Gaol, and, if so, what reasons, disciplinary or precautionary, have occasioned the necessity of Mr. Dunleary's transfer?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he was unable, at present, to answer the question, not having received the necessary information. A report had been called for, but had not yet been received.

BERBERA.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Berbera, on the Somali Coast, was attacked by the Somalis on the 5th of October last; what was the reported strength of the attacking and defending forces, and what were the names of the Civil and Military officers present; and, has the action taken by the officer in charge and his subordinates been sanctioned by the Government; and, if so, is it the intention of the Government to recognize the services of the officers engaged?

*SIR J. GORST: Yes; but no special report has been received of the details of the action, or of the views or intentions of the Government in respect thereof. The attack was made by the Ayal Ahmed tribe, and was repulsed by detachments of the Aden troop and 3rd Bombay Native Infantry under Captain Ashby. On our side the loss was one policeman killed and one wounded.

IRELAND—THE PRISONER TRACY.

MR. M'CARTAN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the visit of Head Constable Preston of the Royal Irish Constabulary to the prisoner Tracy at Milbank Prison, whether he will state by whom the application for permission to visit Tracy was made in this case; whether the name of the intending visitor was mentioned in the application; and whether Head Constable Preston's interview with Tracy was held in the presence of a warder; and, if so, if he will give the name of the warder?

MR. MATTHEWS: The application was made by Mr. Soames, Solicitor, who asked that James Preston, whom he named, might be allowed to see Tracy. James Preston's interviews with Tracy were held within the view of Chief-warder Weir, who was in charge of Tracy. I see that I am erroneously reported to have described Tracy as a "short-time" prisoner—that is, a person imprisoned in default of sureties of the peace.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): The right hon. Gentleman used the expression that the interview took place within the view of the Chief-warder. Was it within the hearing of the Chief-warder?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, it was not. It took place in the room which is commonly called the Solicitor's Room, with a sort of glass cage through which, without being able to hear the conversation, the warder can see all that goes on.

MR. SEXTON: Were these visits to Tracy made at his request or with his knowledge?

MR. MATTHEWS: I believe that the fact is that any prisoner who wishes to see a solicitor is allowed to have an interview.

MR. SEXTON: But this was a head constable and not a solicitor. Had the solicitor for the defence the same free access to the prisoner?

MR. MATTHEWS: The same rule would be applied in all cases when an application is made for an interview with a prisoner.

REMOVAL OF COFFINS FROM FAMILY VAULTS.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding), asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Bishop of St. Albans, having been requested to institute an inquiry into the facts connected with the removal and breaking up of lead coffins from the vault of the Combe family in Hemel Hempsted Church, and the placing of the remains in a hole in the churchyard, has replied that he is advised that he has no power to institute such an inquiry, and has suggested that the only legal remedy is by proceedings under the Church Discipline Acts; and whether, under these circumstances, the Government will undertake to institute such proceedings, or will afford assistance to the descendant of the Combe family, who is the complaining party?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir, I have had no communication with the Bishop of St. Albans on this matter, and I have no information as to any proceedings having been taken before him. I have already pointed out in this House that if any such facts as are alleged have taken place, there is a legal remedy which it is in the power of any person aggrieved to enforce in a sum-

mary way. The consent of the Secretary of State is not necessary to such proceedings, and under these circumstances the Government are not prepared to take any further action in the matter.

BELFAST POST OFFICE.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that after the closing of the post and telegraph office in Waring Street, Belfast, it was found necessary to re-open a branch post office there; and whether, considering that the new general post office affords no convenience to the district of Waring Street for the despatch of telegrams, and that a telegraph office is more urgently required there than the post office, he will now take steps to have a telegraph office established in connection with this branch post office as soon as possible?

MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that I have only to-day received a full report relative to the question of re-establishing the telegraph office in Waring Street, and I should like to have an opportunity of further considering this report before answering the hon. Member's Question.

THE HONOURABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY.

MR. R. K. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he or the Military authorities have taken any, and, if so, what, steps to inquire into the charges of want of discipline made against the Honourable Artillery Company by His Grace the Duke of Portland, the late Lieutenant Colonel of the Regiment; and whether he can state the result of the inquiry?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The Commander-in-Chief has no power, nor have I, to institute such an inquiry.

IRELAND—THE INFORMER CULLINANE.

MR. J. R. COX (Clare, E): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the present address of Cullinane, the informer, or to whom application may be made by the solicitor for the defence in the Royal Commission to have a subpœna served on that person?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe the man is no longer in the country, though I have no personal knowledge of the matter. The hon. Member must be aware that it would endanger Cullinane's life to make known his address, even if it were possible to do so.

MR. COX: Will his whereabouts be made known to a solicitor if he applies to the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It seems to me it would be a serious matter to make public his whereabouts.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Does the right hon. Gentleman mean the House to understand that he refuses the means of producing this witness before the Special Commission for fear of judicial censure?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: To disclose the man's whereabouts might be to place his life in danger.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman name any Officer of the Government who will undertake, upon receiving a subpœna, to serve it upon Callinane?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must have notice of the Question.

CITY CHARITIES.

MR. J. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I have to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education what progress has been made during the last six months in the work of the Charity Commissioners charged with the administration of "The City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883:" and when the scheme or schemes which the Commissioners are to propose for the allocation of the funds dealt with by the Act are likely to be published.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): Perhaps I may be allowed to reply to this Question. During the last six months progress of a very decisive kind (full details of which will appear in their forthcoming Report for 1888, which has been already prepared) has been effected, especially in the negotiations with Committees and other important bodies whose co-operation is essential to a beneficial application of the City Parochial Funds. The Commissioners have also prepared a supplementary statement of property under the Act, the publication of which has been delayed by litigation arising under their former statements; and

they have in two cases prepared schemes of an important kind, which have been for some time the subject of confidential communications with the parties interested. The Commissioners anticipate that the schemes above referred to will be published in the course of the spring; and they hope that during the summer they will be able to publish the whole of the schemes required by the Act.

IRELAND—MR. CECIL ROCHE.

MR. JOHN DILLON (East Mayo): In the absence of my hon. Friend Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool, Scotland Division), I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., was a lecturer in the employ of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union immediately before his selection as a Resident Magistrate; and if, at the time of Mr. Roche's service under that body, the secretary was Mr. E. C. Houston.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that it is the case that Mr. Roche, prior to his appointment to the Resident Magistracy, delivered some addresses without remuneration on behalf of the organization mentioned. Mr. Houston was not then secretary of that body.

IRELAND—JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true that the Land Sub-Commission, which sat in Carrickmacross, county Monaghan, on 9th January last, have not yet given their decision in 95½ cases on the Shirley estate which were then heard, although they have since heard and inspected 40 other cases on the same estate; whether he is aware that the previous decisions of this Sub-Commission have caused general dissatisfaction, and that in consequence of this feeling the tenants are threatening to withdraw from the Court over 200 cases at present listed for hearing during the present Sitting: and whether, under these circumstances, he will represent to the Commissioners the desirability of at once announcing their decision in the cases previously heard, and so enable the tenants to decide what course they will adopt with regard to the cases pending.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that judgment was given on February 28 in the 95 cases referred to, and also in the cases subsequently heard in Carrickmacross at the end of January and beginning of February. The decisions could not have been given earlier, as the inspection of the holdings and the reports on the cases were not completed until that week. A number of cases on the new list of fair-rent applications from tenants on the Shirley estate were heard during the past week, and the remaining cases are being disposed of as rapidly as possible by the Sub-Commission sitting at Carrickmacross.

THE CAUTRAYDOWN FARM CASE.

MR. C. H. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the attention of the Government had been called to the judgments of the Lord Justice Clerk and Lord Young in the Cautrydown Farm Case; whether the Lord Justice Clerk described it as a deplorable case, both in its circumstances and in the way it had been dealt with by the Sheriff Substitute, and that extravagant expense had been incurred owing to the course taken by the Sheriff Substitute, which was entirely and unfortunately wrong; whether Lord Young used similar expressions, and further said that the Sheriff Substitute had by his decision accumulated all the expenses; a decision which he described as absurd and ridiculous; and further, how any Sheriff could have hesitated to take the course the landlord prayed, he (Lord Young) was at a loss to conceive; whether the Government will take any steps to remedy this miscarriage of justice, which has caused heavy expenses to both parties especially the tenant; whether the decisions of the Sheriff Substitute in question have frequently been reversed on appeal; whether out of 16 appeals to the Court of Session in 1886 seven were wholly or partially successful, and out of 21 appeals in 1887 10 were wholly or partially successful; and whether the Government will consider what steps ought to be taken in the matter?

*MR. BUCHANAN: I wish to ask the Lord Advocate before he replies, whether there has not been another case which has given rise to considerable talk, in which the decision of the Sheriff Substitute of Elginshire came before the same Court of Appeal in Edinburgh, and

reversed by them, and the words used by one of the Judges (Lord Young) were almost similar to those used in this case—that he considered that nothing was more extraordinary and ridiculous than the conduct of the Sheriff?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: As regards the Question of the hon. Member for West Edinburgh, I am not acquainted with the case he mentions, but perhaps he will give me notice and particulars. With regard to the Question on the Paper, the figures quoted in the hon. Member's question do not give the result of the Appeals against decisions of this Sheriff Substitute. I find from the judicial statistics that there were 16 Appeals to the Sheriff Principal. In nine of these cases the decision was affirmed, wholly reversed in three cases, while four were partially reversed. In 1887 judgment was affirmed in 11 cases, wholly reversed in five cases, and partly reversed in five cases. As regards cases appealed to the Court of Session, I have ascertained on inquiry that in 1886 there was only one appeal, which was reversed, and in 1887 there were eight appeals, only two of which resulted in reversals. These figures do not call for special observation. In the case particularly mentioned in the Question, the learned Sheriff Substitute decided that an agricultural tenant in bad times was entitled to hold his farm, and at the same time abstain from fulfilling an obligation in his lease to reclaim land. That was certainly an egregious error; but while sympathizing with the protest against this doctrine which is conveyed by the Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman, I think that he may rest satisfied with the authoritative repudiation of it by the Supreme Court, and that it does not call for any action on the part of the Government against a Judge who is otherwise an able and experienced public servant; nor does there seem any reason for interference in the matter of costs, which fall upon the party to the suit, who was pronounced by the Court to have been in the wrong from beginning to end.

IRELAND—THE REV. MR. CLARKE'S ARREST.

MR. WILLIAM J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it is true that the police under District Inspector Somerville broke into the house of Mrs. Dargan, of Mill Mount, county Wicklow, about two a.m. on Thursday, the 28th ultimo, for the purpose of arresting the Rev. Mr. Clarke, and, having forced an entrance, insisted on entering and searching rooms in which women were sleeping; if so, under what authority this forcible entrance was made; if the warrant had been in the hands of the police for at least a month, and that during that time Father Clarke made no attempt to conceal himself or to evade arrest; and why such a time was chosen to arrest him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that it is the case that the police were obliged to force an entrance into the house of Mrs. Dargan, of Mill Mount, at about 3.40 a.m., not 2 a.m., the owner having refused to admit the officer in charge, who demanded admittance on the ground that he had a warrant for the arrest of the Rev. Mr. Clarke, who, he had reason to believe, was in the house. Having entered the house, the owner refused to point out the room occupied by Mr. Clarke. The officer asked at one room whether Mr. Clarke was inside, and receiving no answer he opened the door, but on recognizing a woman's voice he retired, expressing regret. Seeing Mrs. Dargan then making for another room he followed her, and on finding it to be Mr. Clarke's he entered and effected the arrest. The warrant had not been for at least a month in the hands of the police; on the contrary, it had been so for five days only, and during that time Mr. Clarke had absented himself, so far as the police could ascertain, from his residence. The hour selected was with a view to remove the defendant by the early train, so as to obviate any public disturbance.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask if this arrest could not have been carried out before bedtime, or early in the morning? Also whether, as this is the second arrest of a priest in Ireland by means of burglary and breaking into a house at night, and the fourth arrest of priests under exasperating circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman will give instructions to have the arrests carried out in some more convenient and decent manner?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is every desire to carry out these arrests in a decent manner, but the prisoners have done everything in their power to make the arrests difficult.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman say why the arrest was not made either before or at bedtime?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will make inquiries. I may say, in addition to what I have already told the House, that even at the early hour in the morning at which the arrest was effected the church bells were rung in order to collect a crowd.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Under what Statute are the police entitled to improvise a battering ram to break in the door of a private house?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no information that they used a battering ram; on the contrary, I understand that the back door of the premises was pushed open; a policeman got through a window which was unbolted, and opened the front door.

MR. J. P. GILL (Louth, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Father Clarke twice on Sunday said Mass at the usual place of worship in the parish?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I was not aware of it.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

MR. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.): I beg, Sir, to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the members of the Metropolitan Board of Works did, on Friday the 1st of March, raise the salaries of about twenty of their officials, thereby raising considerably the amount to be paid in pensions in the future; whether, besides the increase of salaries above named, the Metropolitan Board of Works granted gratuities to officials for so-called extra services; whether both the increase of salaries and the gratuities were granted in spite of a request addressed to the Metropolitan Board of Works by the London County Council, to the effect that these grants should be referred to the consideration of a joint Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works and the London County Council; and whether there are any means for restraining actions so prejudicial to the Metropolitan ratepayers?

HON. A. DE TATTON-EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): I wish to supplement this question by one of which I have given private notice, and that is, whether it is a fact that no Joint Committee as formulated by the Local Government Act 1888 has been created which could possibly have dealt with this matter?

MR. H. W. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman inform us on what terms—especially with regard to pensions — the County Councils will be expected to take over the Metropolitan Board officials?

*MR. RITCHIE: I believe that no Joint Committee has been formed, and if it had been it could not possibly have had any authority on such a question as this, which is clearly within the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Board of Works. With reference to the Question of the hon. Member for St. Pancras, I should be glad if he will give notice of it. I imagine that the amount of pension depends on the scale of salaries when the new body takes over the officials. With regard to the Question on the paper, I may say I have communicated with the Metropolitan Board of Works as to this matter, and I learn that it has been their practice since 1865, annually, in the month of January, to direct a Committee to consider whether any, and what, alterations should be made in the position and salary of any of their officers. The recommendations made to the Metropolitan Board in the first instance were in accordance with this practice. They were adopted by that Board, and the total of the immediate annual increase of salary thus voted amounts to £131 2s. Gratuities to certain officers for special services, amounting to £431 5s., were also voted, on the recommendation of the Committee. I also find that a request of the kind referred to in the Question was made by the London County Council, and was considered by the Metropolitan Board, but they state that they thought it right to abide by the recommendation of the Committee. The Metropolitan Board appear to have acted within their powers in this matter, and I am not aware of any means of interfering with their action.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the situation is this,

that the Metropolitan Board may raise the salaries to any extent, and that the London County Council will be compelled to give pensions to that amount, although the salaries are raised on the last day of their authority?

*MR. RITCHIE: The right hon. Gentleman is supposing, I imagine, a condition of things which I cannot think any responsible body would take up. But, Sir, I have told the House what would be the duty of the London County Council as to the action of the Metropolitan Board of Works, but it is impossible to express an opinion on the state of things stated by the right hon. Gentleman. He knows quite well that it is not unusual for salaries to have annual increments, but the Metropolitan Board do not seem to have adopted that system. I am informed the course they have taken is in strict accordance with precedent.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich): Do I understand that £131 is the total annual increase in the salaries of the Metropolitan Board staff?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir; according to the information we have received from the Board.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

MR. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Report of the Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis for the year 1888 will be laid upon the Table of the House before the Vote in Supply for the Metropolitan Police is taken?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir; every effort will be made to have the Report presented by then.

SAMOA.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if it is a fact that the Samoan people have, through their chiefs, more than once petitioned to be taken under the protectorate of Great Britain, and that such petitions have received the strong support both of Australasian Governments and organs of public opinion; and, if so, upon what grounds and upon what date or dates the Home Government has declined to secure to the British Empire the Navigator Islands, which have consequently been seized by two Foreign Nations.

SIR J. FERGUSSON: Proposals for a British annexation of Samoa were made by chiefs of that group in 1877, 1883, 1884, and 1888, and were declined at those various periods on the ground that their acceptance would be impolitic, and in the later instances that foreign interests in the islands and our relations with other Powers precluded Her Majesty's Government from annexing the group. The Governments of Australia and New Zealand have in 1873 and 1884 advocated the annexation. I must add that there has been no time at which Her Majesty's Government have failed to secure the independence of these islands. Reciprocal assurances to that effect were given by Her Majesty's Government and the German Government, and the islands have not, in fact, been seized by any foreign Power.

CABLE COMMUNICATION WITH THE CONTINENT.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is in a position to give any information on the question of the working of the submarine cables between this country and Germany, about which a statement was recently made in the Reichstag; and whether arrangements have now been made with France, Belgium, and Holland as regards the working of the submarine cables to those countries?

MR. RAIKES: I am glad to be able to state that the negotiations with the Governments of Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France, which have been in progress for several months past, are now near completion, and I have now every reason to hope that the working and the maintenance of the cables between this country and those named will, after an early date, be entirely in the hands of the telegraphic administrations of five Governments. A uniform rate of 2d. per word, with a *minimum*, will be charged—a reduction in the case of Germany and Holland of 1d. a word, and in the case of France of ½d. per word. At the same time, negotiations have been proceeding and are well advanced between the Governments of France, Belgium, and this country for acquiring from the Submarine Telegraph Company the cables now their property

between England and Belgium and France, and by the Government of this country for the transfer of the officers of the Submarine Company to the service of the Post Office, and the acquisition of the offices, cable ship, stores, &c., by the Post Office.

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

SIR C. RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): I desire to ask the Home Secretary a Question, of which I have given him private Notice, and which, as it relates to the peace of the metropolis, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to answer—namely, whether it is true that notice was given to Mr. Monro twice, by letter, of the intention to hold a meeting near Cleopatra's Needle yesterday, and Mr. Monro did not intimate any intention of preventing such meeting; whether that meeting was forcibly prevented, and, if so, by what authority, and on what ground; also whether Mr. Hyndman intimated his intention of holding a meeting in Hyde Park, near the Achilles statue; whether, while such meeting was being held, it was forcibly suppressed, and whether several assaults were committed by the police?

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): May I ask, further, whether Mr. Hyndman was forcibly knocked down and stamped under foot by police; whether another Socialist was knocked down; and whether a German woman was felled to the ground and called a whore by a policeman?

MR. MATTHEWS: It is perfectly obvious it would be impossible to answer a Question of the kind just put to me without notice. The only information I have had certainly would not convey to my mind that anything resembling a disturbance or a collision with the police had occurred.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: Was the meeting proclaimed, and had the public any means of knowing it would be prevented?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information on that point.

IRELAND — ALLEGED DISTURBANCE AT A CATHOLIC CHAPEL IN CLONMEL.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he has any information as to occurrences which are stated in to-day's newspapers to have taken place in the Catholic Chapel of St. Peter and St. Paul in Clonmel on Sunday last, with reference to the reading of the Bishop's pastoral there, and circumstances which occurred with reference to the Catholic soldiers in that chapel?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. I have no information.

SIR W. HARCOURT: If the right hon. Gentleman will kindly obtain me information I will put a Question on the Paper.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to ask the Secretary for War what orders have been given regarding Lieutenant Geoghegan, who yesterday ordered his men to leave the Catholic Church at Clonmel during Divine service. Has he any authority to take such a step? And is it not a fact that after giving the order the Lieutenant, followed by two sergeants, went out, while the men remained to the end of the service?

MR. JAMES THEOBALD (Essex, Romford): I wish also to ask whether it is true that the priest, by his priestly influence, commanded the men to disobey the order of their officer, and that before the officer left he publicly rebuked the priest?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Has the hon. Member given notice of this question?

MR. THEOBALD: Yes, Sir, I gave private notice to the Secretary of State for War.

MR. E. STANHOPE: Orders have been given that a Report be made upon the case by the General Commanding in Ireland.

PRIVILEGE—DETECTIVES IN THE LOBBY.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): I wish to ask whether it is true, as stated in the *Star* newspaper on Saturday last, that a large number of detectives were stationed in the Members' lobby on Friday night, and, if so, by whose authority, and with what object?

MR. MATTHEWS: The notice of this Question only reached me since I have been in the House, and I have not yet been able to make inquiries on the subject.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st February.]—[See page 41.]

Question again proposed.

*Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I wish to bring before this House a matter——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. The first two Amendments on the Paper, the first standing in the name of the hon. Member for Hoxton, and the second in that of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cockermouth, are out of order as Amendments, inasmuch as they anticipate the discussion, one on three and the other on four Bills which the House has appointed for a future day, and one of those Bills, I observe, is in the name of the hon. Gentleman himself. The Amendment, therefore, of the hon. Gentleman will be out of order as an Amendment to the Address.

*Mr. STUART: Of course, Sir, I entirely bow to your ruling on this subject, but I beg to say with respect to my own Bill that it does not deal with the sanitary part of the subject which is indicated in the Amendment. Therefore, I was not infringing the rule with my eyes open.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman will understand it is not in order for him to move his Amendment.

*Mr. JAMES STUART: Certainly, Sir; but I understand that I am in order in continuing the discussion. I rise, Sir, with the object of bringing before the House what I believe to be not only a very serious and important but also an urgent and pressing matter. I was somewhat surprised that there was no mention in Her Majesty's gracious Speech of a number of important questions which touch more particularly upon the Metropolis, and especially that of the housing of the poor; for there has been before this House and before the country a large quantity of evidence and material on which legislation might be based. There have been many promises by Members of various Governments from the time when the Commission in 1885 issued its Report, which has led us to believe that legislation will take place on this matter before long, and I have now, Sir, to submit that the matter is ripe for legislation. I must not lead the House to expect that the tale I have to bring before it is in any way surrounded by any halo of romance. The sufferings of the poor, in respect to their houses more particularly, form a dull and leaden tale: they are unillumined by any ray of the picturesque. There is no body of people with whose lot this House could more properly sympathize. I beg of the House to listen to one or two extracts from the evidence as to the present state of things in regard to overcrowding. In Wilmington Place there were 11 families in 11 rooms, seven persons occupying one room. In Northampton Court there were 12 persons in a two-roomed house, eight of whom inhabited one room. In Tilney Court, St. Luke's, nine members of a family, five of them being grown up, inhabited one room, 10 feet by 8. In Summer's Court, Holborn, there were two families in a room 12 feet by 8. At 79 Cromer Street there was an underground back kitchen 12 feet by 9, and 8 feet high, inhabited by 7 persons. In Spitalfields, 35 Hanbury Street, is a house of nine rooms, and there was an average of seven persons in each room. In no room was there more than one bed. These are facts culled from many hundreds. What are the facts as to the rent paid under these circumstances? It is said in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes that from a number of about 1,000 dwellings taken at random in the different poor parts of London there are 88 per cent. of the whole number who pay more than one-fifth of their income in rent, and 46 per cent., or nearly a half, who pay from a quarter to a half of their income in rent. The average rents paid in these 1,000 cases are, for one-roomed house, 3s. 10¾d.; for a two-roomed house 6s., and for a three-roomed house 7s. 5½d. Now as to the sanitary condition of these houses. The connection with the sewers is faulty. In Halfmoon Court there was a case given of five houses having only one ashpit between them. The inadequacy of the water supply is still the cause of much unhealthiness and

misery. The supply is in some parts of London very uncertain, and when it is drawn it is kept by the poor in tubs, sometimes in sleeping rooms, there being no storage accommodation. The cutting off of the water supply by Water Companies on account of non-payment of the rate also leads to much evil. The closet accommodation is most defective. Hundreds of instances of this can be cited. I now come to another point—the condition of the bodily health of these people. I understand that the average death-rate of London is 19. In the Waterlow Buildings, which are more sanitarily conducted than most of such buildings, the average deathrate is 13; but in Wellington Square, which is large enough over which to take an average, the death-rate is 53·7 per 1,000. The suffering of little children is one most painful aspect of the whole case. There are large districts of London in which children suffer greatly from ophthalmia in consequence of the homes in which they live. Some years ago the Board of Health instituted inquiries in the low neighbourhoods to see what was the amount of labour lost in the year, not by illness, but by sheer exhaustion and inability to do work. It was found, upon the lowest average, that every workman or workwoman lost about 20 days in the year from simple exhaustion. The wages thus lost would go towards an increased rent for a better house. Lord Shaftesbury speaks of the moral effect of the present state of things. The one-room system also leads, as far as I have seen, to the one-bed system. I need not go further into that question than to say that the Royal Commission call particular attention to the state of morality in London as being distinctly higher than they could expect from such surroundings. Who is to blame?" Are the tenants to blame? I have waded through the Report of the Commission, and there is scarcely anything that has even a gleam of pathos in it except one little sentence written by Lord Shaftesbury. He says—"It is perfectly impossible for those poor people, with the best intentions, to keep their houses clean. Their hearts are broken, and they have not the means of doing it."

*MR. SPEAKER: I am very sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but I must say he is quite, no doubt unintentionally, evading the ruling I have given, because he is now anticipating a discussion which must come on one or two of the three Bills, or on all of the Bills to which I have referred. This question arose in 1886, and I was obliged to give the same ruling.

*MR. JAMES STUART: I am sure, Sir, you will acquit me of any desire to disobey your ruling. I will not pursue the remarks which you rule to be distinctly improper at this point. There is, however, one matter which I think cannot come within the provision of the Bills to which you have referred—namely, the Amendment that ought to be made in the Standing Order of the House bearing upon this question. One of the principal reasons of the over-crowding, the results of which we all so much deprecate, is the demolitions of buildings which take place in pursuance of Bills passed by the House. The demolitions take place with a view of erecting better dwellings for the poorer classes. But the new buildings take considerable time to erect, and in the meantime the people who are evicted from their homes are put to the greatest straits. An alteration was made in the Standing Order in respect to Railway and other Bills before the Commission reported; but I wish to urge upon the Government the necessity of further alteration in the direction I am about to indicate. The present Standing Order requires that a railway company which is about to demolish 20 or more houses in any one parish should make provision for the re-housing of the tenants evicted. I wish to urge the Government to alter the Standing Order, so that if 20 persons are evicted provision for their re-housing should be made. Furthermore, it is desirable that the Standing Order should prevent a railway company or other company using for other purposes the houses erected for the accommodation of the poorer classes. Again, I would urge that the Standing Order should be so amended that someone should be charged with the duty of seeing that the provisions of the Order are carried out. I would suggest that, so far as the Metropolis is concerned, it would be right and proper that the London County Council should be charged with seeing that the buildings erected in compliance with the Standing Order are

suitable buildings; and, further, that the demolition and erection of buildings should as far as possible go on simultaneously and not successively—that is to say, that the demolition should not take place all at once. In one year alone in the Metropolis Railway Bills were passed which involved the razing of 1,807 houses, and the turning out of 14,905 persons. So the magnitude of the matter is very great. There is no doubt in the minds of those who have communicated with me upon the matter that the provisions of the Standing Order are not fulfilled. The present Government is, from their own showing, under a special obligation to deal with the matter. In the Amendment which I put on the paper, I asserted that the sanitary question should be dealt with. I did so because if you once enter upon an improvement in the sanitary condition of the dwellings of the working classes, you open out a much wider question — a question which Lord Salisbury fully recognized when he introduced the Bill of 1885—for he then said that that Bill must be considered a complete outcome of the Commissioners' Report, adding that there were large and difficult questions untouched, which the circumstances of the Session did not permit of them dealing with then. It will be in the recollection of the House that recently my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley) went down to the East of London and touched upon certain points affecting the well-being of the working classes, more particularly in the Metropolis. The programme then unfolded by the right hon. Gentleman has been spoken of as the Clerkenwell-cum-Limehouse programme. The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) went down to the East End a little later and made a speech upon similar topics. The Chancellor of the Exchequer found fault with my right hon. Friend for what he had said. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

"It is a preposterous innuendo on the part of our opponents to suggest that they are more qualified than we are to deal with the social reforms which are now being put forward."

The social reforms the Chancellor of the Exchequer particularly referred to were the housing of the poor, leasehold enfranchisement, and the relative burdens borne by the rich and poor. I have read my right hon. Friend's (Mr J. Morley's) speech, but I have not been able to find any innuendo, unless it consisted of this—that he undertook to deal with these questions, and thereby made it appear that he thought that he was fit to do so. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also said—

"I do not doubt Mr. Morley's sincerity, but what I am here to bring to the minds of this meeting is that the Unionist Party is better qualified by the previous history of its Members and its present intentions to deal with these burning questions."

What I really want to ask is, why on earth does he not deal with them? The Chancellor of the Exchequer continued—

"We humdrum workers may be allowed to smile, and to ask the public to smile, when we see the wirepullers getting hold of the idealists and instructing them to deal in general phrases—mind, in general phrases — with some of those problems and subjects."

Then he refers to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone). He said there is a wall between him and his ability to reach these questions, and that was the Irish question; and he went on to say—

"We do not see the wall at all. We see a heap of ruins over which we conduct our victorious forces to gather the harvests which they long for—harvests which we have been engaged in gathering, and to fields where we hope still to be able to sow and to reap crops. What is the difference between ourselves and our opponents? We see that we can act now."

And, lastly, after he had drawn a terrible picture as to its taking the Liberal Party ten years before they could touch these questions, the right hon. Gentleman said—

"But the Unionist Party do not propose to postpone for ten years measures necessary and desirable for the improvement of the people. We do not look forward so far. We believe that the time for dealing with important questions is not ten years hence after all these Utopias have been dealt with, but yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow."

These were the very impressive words with which he concluded his reference to the subject, and then he added:—

"As the Session is so near at hand, I think you will all agree with me that it would be impossible for me to disclose the measures which will be announced by the Cabinet as a whole."

What was the meaning of that speech? Did it not mean to any plain, honest man that we were going to see some of this very necessary legislation tackled by

the present Government? I came down to the House on the opening day in the full hope and expectation of finding that some real measure for the benefit of the poorer classes of the Metropolis would be dealt with. How is it that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has abandoned his position? Is it that he has not been able to carry his Colleagues with him? There was nothing in the Queen's Speech, and nothing in the speeches of the Mover or Seconder of the Address, about these matters which the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, down in the East of London, were subjects to be dealt with "yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow." If the right hon. Gentleman's words mean anything, they mean immediate and present action. Much is said about the operation of economic laws, but in one sense our whole existence and progress in this world, both in legislative and scientific matters, and as regards everything else, consists of a contest against the operation of natural laws; and I cannot admit that we are bound to sit powerless, and do nothing for the poorer classes, because economic laws may denude them largely of what they ought to have. I know of no better step for the bettering of the position of the poorer classes than that of improving the sanitary condition of their houses. I had some conversation only the other day with Mr. Tarrant, the Managing Director of the Artizans' and Labourers' General Dwelling Company, and he told me that no one can get land in London for the market value, and then let the houses at a rent which the working classes can pay, the houses being good and sanitary. If that is true, there is opened up a very serious aspect of things. Let me refer for a moment to the financial part of the question. The agent for the Ecclesiastical Commissioners is reported as having said that the first difficulty in providing buildings as artizans' dwellings is the procuring of sites, and that the second difficulty is that, even if sites can be procured, the ground rents are so enormous. Mr. Tarrant said to me—"There is a large capital loss in the provision of the sites. Land must be got at the cost of the community, or from the big landlords. If the land costs 2d. a foot a-year rent, the ground rental chargeable on a room is 3d. per week."

*MR. SPEAKER: I have listened very carefully to what the hon. Gentleman has said. There is nothing in what he has said which is not pertinent to the Second Reading of one or other of the Bills which the House has ordered to be read on a future day. I am sorry to tell the hon. Gentleman that he is out of order.

*MR. JAMES STUART: Sir, I will bow, of course, to your decision, and conclude my remarks by repeating that this is a matter which will not wait. We have arrived at a time when we must do something, and do it very speedily, for the poorer class of persons who are becoming better educated, but who are still housed in the manner I have endeavoured to describe.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I think it will have been obvious to the House that the course the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stuart) has pursued is somewhat inconvenient. The hon. Gentleman has had on the paper an Amendment to the Address that he has altered once at least, if not oftener, to bring it within the Orders of the House; and although, no doubt, the hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to comply with Mr. Speaker's ruling, yet almost every remark that he has made would have been germane to Bills before the House, and it is, therefore, extremely difficult to follow him without trenching in some degree on the Rules of the House. For myself, I believe that on both sides and in all quarters of the House there is a universal feeling that the sufferings of the poor in the Metropolis and in the country are great, and are borne with heroic fortitude; and nothing, I am sure, could give greater satisfaction to hon. Members generally than if they were able to minister, in however small a degree, to the comfort and happiness of the working classes. The Party to which I belong have shown their sympathy with the poor on many occasions by the legislation they have inaugurated and supported. And my answer to the hon. Gentleman's speech is that it is not so much legislation that is wanted in that matter as a reform in administration. I am perfectly ready to admit that, as far as the Report of the Royal Commission is concerned, there is much to be done in the way of legislation by

means of the consolidation and amendment of the present Sanitary Acts; but the hon. Gentleman will admit that, so far as the most important recommendation of that Commission is concerned, there is no Commission in modern times whose principal recommendations have been more speedily carried into law than those of the Royal Commissioners on this subject have been. They reported in 1885, and an Act was passed in the same year which has given effect to many of the Commission's most important recommendations; and, in addition to that, a Bill was presented to the House of Lords by Lord Salisbury, in the same Session, dealing with another part of the question, although, unfortunately, the state of public business has been such since that time that our hands have filled to overflowing with matters of a most important character, and we have not been able to press forward that Bill. I adhere to every word which my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said, and to which the hon. Member has referred. The Government are most anxious to deal with the other recommendations of the Commission, and we have a Bill at the Local Government Board which, although like several other measures of a social character it has not been mentioned in the Queen's Speech, it is hoped may be dealt with in the present Session with great benefit to the people. The necessities of the country have undoubtedly prevented us from dealing with a large number of these matters, but we have not given up the hope that we may be able to deal with them, though they have not been mentioned in the Queen's Speech. Whilst not denying that there is room for legislation in connection with the subject the hon. Gentleman has referred to, I have said that, in my opinion, it is not so much legislation that is wanted as better administration. That was also the opinion of no less an authority than Lord Shaftesbury. In the time of the Royal Commission of 1885 the late Lord Shaftesbury expressed the opinion that the Labouring Classes Lodging Houses Act would, if properly carried out, meet almost every requirement and remedy a great part of the existing evil; and the Mansion House Committee--who are entitled to the thanks of everyone interested in the condition of the dwellings of the poor—acknowledged to the full that the existing Sanitary Act, if put into operation, will effect much of the improvement that is needed, and add greatly to the comfort, health, and happiness of the neighbouring population in the Metropolis. I have referred to the Act of 1885, which was brought in to give effect to many of the principal recommendations of the Royal Commission. That Act made an important alteration in the Act referred to by Lord Shaftesbury. The administration of that Act was a parochial administration, and the Royal Commission suggested that the first thing requiring to be done was to make it Metropolitan instead of parochial. The Act of 1885 effected that change accordingly. The hon. Member asks whether much has been done under it. Well, I do not believe that anything has been done under it; but that is not the fault of legislation, but of administration. The Act of 1885 dealt with many other matters, among them being that of sites. The Royal Commission proposed that the sites of existing prisons should be made available for the erection of dwellings for the labouring poor, and their Report pointed rather to these sites being offered to the local authorities for that purpose. In the Bill introduced to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission it was provided that these sites should be offered to the local authorities on such terms as would enable them to be thus made available; but the House of Commons then thought the Government were going too far, and it put in stipulations with reference to that particular point, making it necessary that if the sites were taken for that purpose they should be taken at the full market value. It is obvious that that forms a very important impediment in the way of providing cheap dwellings for the labouring poor. But it was the House that altered the proposal of the Government in the direction of making it less easy for the local authorities to acquire the site.

*MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that the question of the provision of sites for dwellings for the working classes is directly covered by the Bills to which he has referred.

*MR. RITCHIE: I was afraid it would be hardly possible for me to get through

without being out of order. I will not go further into this particular point, which I have only touched upon because the hon. Member made a good deal of it; but I may mention that the hon. Gentleman is under an error in thinking that the poor now suffer from the cutting off of the water supply for non-payment of rates. A most useful measure, which entirely removed that particular grievance, was introduced and carried by the hon. Member for West Ham (Mr. Forrest Fulton). Going on to the question of administration, there is one other recommendation of the Commission of a most important character—namely, that London government should be reformed. The hon. Gentleman will acknowledge that something has been done to give effect to that recommendation. We have created in the Metropolis a large body directly elected by the ratepayers, in the place of a body directly elected by the Vestries. If the Vestries and Local Boards throughout the Metropolis did not properly exercise their powers, it was hardly likely that the members returned by the Vestries and Local Boards to the central body would do so. All that is now changed; and when the London County Council settles down to the work with which Parliament has charged them, I have no doubt whatever that if they exercise the powers which have been conferred on them, they will in a short time remedy a vast number of the evils that have been complained of. Upon matters of this kind we are all Radicals—the whole House of Commons is radical on the point of desiring to see the newly-created body exercising every power it possesses to compel the local authorities to do their duty under the Sanitary Acts by giving a plentiful supply of water, and ventilation, and light where they are required. None of us, however conservative, are at all likely to complain of the exercise to the full of the powers vested in the London County Council.

*MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): There are no such powers.

*MR. RITCHIE: Does the hon. Member deny that under the Lodging Houses Act the powers of the Metropolitan Board are transferred to the London County Council, and that they are enabled to hire, purchase, erect, furnish, manage, and let houses as lodgings for the working classes?

*MR. LAWSON: The right hon. Gentleman will excuse me for interrupting him, but he spoke of water and sanitation, and not of lodging houses; and in sanitary matters the London County Council has no power over the Vestries and District Boards.

*MR. RITCHIE: What does the hon. Gentleman mean by "sanitation"? Does he not place in the very forefront of this question of sanitation this question of overcrowding? I am sure that the hon. Member who introduced this subject does—judging from his speech. What can be more effectual to prevent overcrowding than to give the County Council power to hire, erect, purchase, and let buildings for the lodging of the working classes? Besides, the London County Council will not only be the authority in respect of lodging houses, but they will be the authority for carrying out Torrens' Act, which deals with small areas, and will enable them to clear out close and confined courts and alleys, and to deal with the insanitary condition of small areas. The London County Council will also be enabled to deal with larger areas under Lord Cross's Act. It is also proposed to ask the House to transfer to the County Council additional powers under the Nuisances Removal Act, 1866, which deals with sanitation, with overcrowding, with nuisances generally, and with individual houses. As the hon. Gentleman is aware, these powers have now to be exercised by the vestries and the district boards, and if they do not do their duty there is an appeal to the Local Government Board; but a central Department cannot effectually put these powers into operation, and it is proposed to transfer them from the Local Government Board to the London County Council. Then, if a local authority fails in its duty, an appeal can be made to the London County Council, which can appoint officers to take action and bring responsible persons before the proper tribunal.

*MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): Under what authority will these powers be conveyed to the London County Council?

*MR. RITCHIE: They will be conveyed by the Provisional Order Bill, which I have undertaken to introduce for the purpose of vesting the powers of the Local Government Board in the London County Council. It is proposed

to do more than this. We further propose to require Medical Officers of Health in London to make reports annually, or more often, if desired, to the County Council and to the Local Government Board, giving full particulars as to the sanitary condition of their districts. Hitherto such reports have not been called for in the Metropolis by the Local Government as they are in the rest of the country. The London County Council has the power to appoint a Medical Officer of Health of their own, and, assisted by reports from the local Medical Officers of Health, they will be able to keep themselves in touch with all local areas in the Metropolis. It will be a matter for consideration whether, looking at the particular circumstances of the Metropolis, these reports should not be made oftener than once a year, but whether that be so or not I think it is a most important duty that we propose to impose on the Medical Officers of Health and the London County Council. I can only now say that the Government will take into consideration these and all the other matters that have been referred to. I trust that, though they have not been mentioned in the Queen's Speech, we may be able to deal with many others of the subjects mentioned in the Report of the Royal Commission.

*MR. STUART: Will the right hon. Gentleman take into consideration the desirability of reprinting the Report of the Royal Commission?

*MR. RITCHIE: I will take care that that is attended to.

*MR. STUART: It is very much wanted.

*MR. RITCHIE: I think I have shown that there are many subjects remaining to be dealt with yet. If the new authorities we have set up in London will undertake the duties imposed on them with an honest and earnest desire to carry them out to the full, it may be considered that many of the evils complained of are already in the course of being remedied.

*MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): So long as this discussion is kept clear of your ruling, the Government have no reason to complain if London Members protest against the absolute and wilful neglect of London interests and London questions in the programme of the Session. I am very glad, however, that the right hon. Gentleman has not sought to persuade the House that there is no urgency in dealing with these questions, in face of the notorious facts and the circumstances by which they were surrounded, which were so strongly impressed on the mind of the people of London last autumn by the occurrence of atrocious crime. No doubt, the fact that these questions are social, and not political, partly accounts for the absence of reference to them in the Queen's Speech; but, nevertheless, they depend to a great extent upon this House for solution, and surely they are as worthy of mention as a Scotch University Bill. Another reason why the Government is not prepared to deal more drastically with London questions is that among the London Members they have a majority of five to one at their back. These are, on the whole, a docile and inoffensive body of men, who do not make themselves unpleasant in high quarters. We have been called by an American critic the "City State," but it seems to me we have less attention from the Treasury Bench than any little Pedlington in the country. It is not for me to advise—perhaps it would be impertinent for me to do so—Her Majesty's Government or the Local Government Board as to reforms of Metropolitan government, but I can assure the right hon. Gentlemen, coming fresh from a municipal election, that there is a growing tide of indignation in London at the succession of slurs put upon us. Take the Local Government Act of last Session; true, we were included in it, but that was because we could not be left out of it, but the clauses affecting London were rushed through with almost indecent haste, and when we rose to protest, a threat was shadowed forth that the clauses would be dropped altogether. That did not happen because we did all we could to forward the Bill. We did so because we thoroughly approved of the democratic principle incorporated in it. But the Act has in many cases made the existing confusion of London government more confounded. There never has been a time since 1855 when the condition of London government was in a condition so chaotic and inorganic as it is to-day. The constitution of the Metropolitan Board of

Works supplied a connecting link between the various existing boards and sanitary bodies, something like the relation between the Central and District Councils, we may call it. But at the present moment there is no responsibility at all to the central authority, even in sanitary administration. These local bodies are so many sovereign powers. What I want to ask is this. We have seen rumours in the Press as to the measures the Government is going to amend and supplement the Act of last Session, but I should like to have it from the right hon. Gentleman publicly, is that measure to include London or not?

*MR. RITCHIE: I gave the same answer to a similar question last year. The hon. Member is not raising any new point. It was distinctly raised last year, and I then stated with what I believe was the unanimous concurrence of the House, that the interests of London government were so great that they required to be dealt with in a Bill by themselves and that I could not undertake to deal with that particular part of the question this Session.

*MR. LAWSON: Then I may take it from the right hon. Gentleman that London will not be dealt with this Session?

*MR. RITCHIE: Certainly.

*MR. LAWSON: Then you have given us this great gaunt skeleton of local government and absolutely refuse to clothe it with flesh and blood. I can assure the House that from a sanitary and social point of view, the interior reform of London government is more important than the reform of the Central Government itself. The right hon. Gentleman has himself shown by the reform he has suggested that nearly all sanitary administration is in the hands of parochial authorities, and the County Council is almost powerless in such matters. These Vestries and District Boards have to administer the Nuisances Removal Act; we have no authority to administer the Sanitary Acts of 1866; they are responsible for the sanitary condition of every existing structure——

*MR. RITCHIE: I said distinctly it was so, and that I proposed, by a Provisional Order Bill, to transfer powers to the London County Council to deal with such matters itself in case of default by local authority.

*MR. LAWSON: But that will not amend the constitution of these local bodies. Nobody stands up in this House for the greater part of the Vestries of London. They are left to administer all powers, except such as those under the Torrens and Cross Acts, and the London County Council will have no control over local authorities, except the possibility that in the future it will be able to exert some indirect influence of direction over Officers of Health hereafter to be appointed. When they make their Reports, then it will be all right; but the right hon. Gentleman has not yet suggested it is possible to allow us to enforce them. I do hope the right hon. Gentleman will realize that there is nothing so bad for London as to allow this confusion to be prolonged. We had a half promise, as I understood it, that this Session we should have an Amending Bill to consolidate and dovetail the different pieces of London government, and now we are told we may get it next year, and perhaps we shall not get it at all. But what is required more than anything is this interior reform of London administration. Some vestries are not so black as they are painted, and in others, where you have the house jobber and the sweater dominant, the fault lies with those superior persons in London who regard the petty affairs of their own neighbourhood as beneath their notice. There ought to be diminution in the number of members of Vestries, in order that office held in them should be of greater dignity, and the electorate would have a larger choice of men, and most certainly you ought to do away with the indirect representation in district bodies, as you have condemned it in the central body. You should bring in a short Bill to place Vestries and District Boards under the general jurisdiction of the County Council for sanitary purposes. The work of assimilating the sanitary administration of London is even more important than consolidating the Sanitary Law. What we want is unity and uniformity, and I would press on the right hon. Gentleman, how are you to improve administration while you leave these bodies in all their present corruption? Why are you not prepared to supplement the good work of

last Session, and help through the reforms we require to meet our pressing needs. Session after Session you have the advice of experts. You had a Committee to inquire into the immigration of foreigners into London, and the sanitary aspect of the question occupied much attention on the inquiry. One witness, the Sanitary Inspector for Whitechapel, described the uncertainty of administration in relation to overcrowding. The Act did not define overcrowding, and so in some districts 400 cubic feet of space was required for each person, in others 300 cubic feet, and in others 250 feet. You have this state of things, that you define the breathing space a pauper shall have in the workhouse, you prescribe the space a cow shall have in her licensed shed, yet you are content to leave the ordinary citizen who does not enter the workhouse to the varying mercies of each medical Officer of Health, who sets up his own standard in his own district. This gentleman's evidence contained another important piece of advice. He said the sanitary condition of the registered common lodging houses was subject to police inspection only. These lodging-houses are under the police—but whom are the police under? When Estimates were were voted for their maintenance they were under this House, now they will be paid from local funds without being under local control. He said he only visited such when there was a question of structural alteration or something of that kind. I do not quote opinions of politicians; the House is aware that several Metropolitan Magistrates have expressed in the strongest terms their sense of the pernicious influence these common lodging houses have upon the people. Then I might draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to a suggestion, and a principle that has been embodied in many local Acts, that is the compulsory registration of the existence of infectious disease. In his last report the Vestry Medical Officer for Chelsea draws attention to the subject.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I have already intimated my intention to introduce a Bill on the subject.

*Mr. LAWSON: I was not aware of that, and am very glad to hear it. That disposes of one of the recommendations that sanitary reformers in London would like to make. I will not detain the House at length, but I would point out that whilst there have been many amendments of the law made which have remedied the state of things revealed by the Commission to inquire into the housing of the working classes, certain facts remain as true now as ever they were. I have read the whole of the evidence taken by the Commission twice over, but I will not trouble the House with Blue Book extracts as to this or the evidence given before the Town Holdings Committee. The Commission was to some extent of an ornamental character, and all who have read the evidence will feel that it would justify a great deal more than is recommended in the Report. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether seriously he can make much boast of the Act passed in 1885 to amend the law as to the dwellings of the working-classes, when everybody knows that it has been a dead letter. The right hon. Gentleman says that is the fault of Administration, but why should he refuse to reform those bodies that have to carry out the provisions of Lord Shaftesbury's Lodging house Act. He may say the County Council is in existence, and the Metropolitan Board of Works is swept away, but in the administration of sanitary laws, Vestries and Local Boards have far more to say than the County Council. The County Council may in time exercise some general supervision, but until you pass a measure of interior reform for London all the rest will be worth very little. May I call attention to the facts contained in the Appendix to the Report in reference to the proportion of population to houses and area in London and two other great towns. In the central district of London you have the proportion of 158 of population to the acre and 10·3 to the house; while in Birmingham it is 83 population to the acre and 5·1 to the house; and in Liverpool, 85 to the acre and 4·5 to the house. Therefore these are about double the population to the house and the acre in London that you have in Birmingham and Liverpool. Mr. Williams gives some most interesting facts as to the rent paid by the artizan and labouring classes in London. He says that 46 per cent, pay from a quarter to a half of their wages in rent; 42 per cent pay from a quarter to a

fifth; and 12 per cent pay less than one fifth. That, in fact, 88 per cent of the working classes pay more than a fifth of their weekly earnings in the form of rent. Can anyone say this state of things is in a way to be remedied? Some of the more glaring scandals have disappeared, not owing to legislation but to the force of public opinion, which has not yet died away. If "slumming" has gone out of fashion we still have the Mansion House Committee, and we cannot praise too highly the work that Committee has done and is doing. Some people may tell you that voluntary action and individual enterprize are solving the problem and meeting the difficulty, but that is not the case. Nobody who has knowledge of the subject will seek to take any one iota of the praise due to the "Improved Industrial Dwellings Company," the "Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Company," and other associations of the kind. If they offend against æsthetic canons in the external appearance of these buildings.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now certainly touching upon matters to which, I must remind him, one or more Bills now before the House are addressed.

*MR. LAWSON: I was not proposing, Sir, to enter upon the subject as a whole, but only to refer to the voluntary principle and those cases where no power is given by Act of Parliament. But, however, I drop that subject, only saying that experience has shown clearly that you are able to give to the skilled artizan class sound housing at a reasonable cost as a commercial speculation, on a business footing, but you have not in the least provided for housing the very poor, that is as much a necessity to-day as it was when the Commission sat. I should like to give from my personal knowledge an instance that has not yet been made public. The Whitechapel murders were committed within a small area of ground. The right hon. Gentleman knows very well the small streets and alleys contiguous to the Commercial Road make up a very plague-spot of human misery. Well, in consequence of the scare caused by the murders there was a general exodus from the numerous lodging-houses of the district. In one of these the number of occupied beds was reduced from 130 to 20 in one night. It came to the ears of a number of gentlemen, some of them Members of this House, that the whole of these foul dwellings were situated on a single property, and that a great many of the house-owners fearing that they would be unable to earn their livelihood, wished to dispose of the fag-ends of their leases. Well, an offer was made to the ground landlords of the property, a most respectable family. They were a little apprehensive that, as the scandals went on, for fear that their names might be published, for fear that it should be proclaimed throughout the land, that for years they and their respectable agent had been allowing the covenants to remain unperformed, and in taking in the form of ground rents the wages of infamy. Well, the panic passed away, and though a reasonable offer was made, which at first they were ready to accept, they ended by raising their terms and demanded such a high figure that it was impossible to deal with them, and the negotiations for sale fell through, so the place is left a disgrace to the owners and a source of ruin to the neighbourhood. If a public authority had tried to deal with this area they would have found themselves obliged to pay the price required for the goodwill of crime and vice under the existing law. "Severance" and "compensation for compulsory sale" are pretty terms for the protection of rights of property, but I appeal to the House whether the family of ground landlords who owned this plague spot in Whitechapel would not have got off very easily if they had received the price of the bare ground without a penny for the dens erected upon it, considering the purposes to which it had been applied and the profit they had made out of the land for so many years. I am quite well aware that no act of legislation can change the face of London; I am quite aware you are unable to do away with the meeting points of poverty and crime, but, at least, this you can do by carrying out some of the reforms suggested, withdraw that protection and aid the law now gives to the propagation of disease and the demoralization of the whole community.

*COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich): Compensation for compulsory purchase is not given if the houses are condemned.

*Mr. LAWSON: They were not condemned and could not be.

*Colonel HUGHES: The hon. Member instituted a comparison between London and Birmingham in population at per house to show that Birmingham was less overcrowded than London, but his assumption is incorrect, because in London the houses are much larger, and if you want to make a comparison of the number of persons in each house you must also take the cubical contents of the houses.

*Mr. LAWSON: I did not make the comparison; I quoted it from the Report.

*Colonel HUGHES: With regard to the Bye-laws for the regulation of lodging houses and the difference in the amount of cubic space allowed, it must be remembered that all these regulations have been sanctioned by the Local Government Board. I have never noticed this difference, but at any rate should the hon. Member be right, when these powers are transferred it will be the duty of the County Council, of which the hon. Member is so distinguished an ornament, to see that the bye-laws sanctioned are uniform. I do not see how in the Royal Speech allusion could have been made to the Provisional Orders mentioned. The transfer of powers by Provisional Order was provided for in the Act of last Session, and there was no need to mention what is already on the Statute Book. I am glad there is to be this transfer, and the opportunity of introducing uniformity. I am a little disappointed, I must confess, that the formation of District Councils is to be postponed. It is quite true that at the present time there is a connecting link between the central authority and the District Boards in consequence of members of the Board being elected by the district authorities. That is a very valuable link no doubt, and when the District Councils come to be formed no doubt the right hon. Gentleman will allow the representatives on the central body, the London County Council, to be *ex-officii* members of the District Councils, so that the link so useful at present may be preserved? I consider the confusion of areas in the different districts of London a great scandal. It leads to expense and maladministration, and I can only imagine this matter is deferred because the right hon. Gentleman desires that the London County Council should apply its mind to the best means of rearranging the districts of the Metropolis. It is a difficult question to conciliate and harmonise conflicting interests.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): It is important that the question of London District Councils should be dealt with as speedily as possible, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman realises the importance of altering the state of things now existing. I would draw attention to a small inaccuracy in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. It may have been merely a slip, but it has some bearing on transactions the Home Secretary may have to carry out. In alluding to the Act of 1885, the right hon. Gentleman said in that year the House of Commons, not being—as I should put it—so much advanced in sympathy with the people, altered the recommendation of the Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, that prison sites should be sold for less than market value, to "full market value." Now, I think it was "fair," not "full" market value. In offering the Millbank site, I hope a generous interpretation will be put upon the expression, "fair market value." The site of Coldbath Fields Prison could not be used for artisans' dwellings, on account of the high price that was asked for it. The Artisans' Dwellings Company refused it, and obtained a better site on the opposite side of the way, from the Metropolitan Board of Works, upon which a large block of dwellings has been erected, while the prison site has been taken by the post-office authorities for the parcel post extension. Additional accommodation was the more important in this district, as there are large Government offices and much overcrowding. There is one thing in the Act of 1885 to which I would draw attention and suggest that a small Act should be passed. The right hon. Gentleman will be aware that under the Act of 1885, which was passed to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission, special borrowing powers were given. The Royal Commission recommended that there should be embodied in the Act special borrowing powers to carry out these improvements, but it was found impossible for these purposes to borrow at the rate of 3¼ per

cent. instead of the higher sums of times gone by. If I might make the suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman, the Home Secretary, it would be worth while in a short Bill, which I am sure would be received with no opposition from my part of the House, to give that power again, so that if the London County Council come to deal with these questions of sanitation, they may have the privileges of borrowing money at the same rate of interest as recommended in the Report of the Royal Commission. I think I understand from the right hon. Gentleman that he regards the question as one rather of administration than of legislation. I have no doubt that the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Home Secretary will have seen a very valuable report issued by the Clerkenwell Vestry, which has been doing good work. A Committee of that body has dealt with the question of blind alleys and courts in their neighbourhood, and from their report it will be seen that totally apart from the question of the housing of the poor, there is a vast number of things to be done—the making of thoroughfares where there were no thoroughfares, or blind alleys, and the pulling down of houses which formed the arched entrances of courts. The whole of that work involved a very heavy expenditure; and it will be found from the report to which I have referred that, had all the works necessary to be done been executed, it would have put upon the parish of Clerkenwell a rate that the ratepayers would have been unable to meet. And it further states that the evils which the Royal Commission pointed out are still in force, and that until there is an alteration, it is feared they will inevitably be so. The Vestry find that they cannot do all they desire until the evil reported on by the Royal Commission as to the housing of the poor has been legislated upon. I find in the report also a suggestion as to future legislation, to which I call the attention of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I see the attention of the Metropolitan Board of Works is called to certain squares in the parish of Clerkenwell, and the opinion is expressed that they ought to be dealt with by the Metropolitan Authority, and that the clauses in the Act of 1882 (Sir Richard Cross's Act), limiting the areas dealt with to not less than 10,000 houses, should be repealed. What the Report suggests is a series of small areas in the same neighbourhood, and they propose 10 houses in each, and that it should be possible to deal with these by the Central Authority, instead of leaving the work to small parishes like Clerkenwell, with a population of 80,000 people. I deeply regret that the Government have not been able to recommend, in the Speech from the Throne, that some of these London grievances should be dealt with. I can assure them of one thing, that London is becoming very impatient. More will be heard of London in this House than has been heard in the past. In the good old days before 1885, it was almost matter of wonder to hear the voice of a Metropolitan Member, or anything with regard to London, in this House. Now, London will have to be listened to, and the reforms it requires will have to be dealt with, and I do hope that before long the Government will give us some indication that they are prepared to do these things. I regret that I cannot go deeply into this question in the Debate, but I hope for some early opportunity, when I think it will be possible to prove to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, that the question is not simply one of administration, but that there is a vast amount of legislation required before London will be put into a satisfactory position.

*MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) said, I am bound to say that I dissent from the observation of the hon. Member for St. Pancras, that the Government has done little for London, for last Session it passed a measure, much of which has direct relation to London, of greater magnitude and complexity than any London measure that has been passed for years. It has been complained that London is not mentioned in the Queen's Speech; but if London were specifically mentioned, then every hon. Member would have an equal right to contend that the particular district in which he was interested should be mentioned. I enter my protest against that sectional way of dealing with public questions. I yield to no one in my desire that these important matters should be brought before the attention of the House. I quite agree that there are many matters connected with the sanitation of London which

press for earnest attention and early treatment by Her Majesty's Government. Who could have listened to the speech of the President of the Local Government Board to-night without seeing that he is a Minister who thoroughly understands London questions, and who sympathizes with the difficulties of the poor? But hon. Members opposite have chosen an irregular, inconvenient, and futile opportunity of raising London questions. London Conservative Members are at least as anxious as Metropolitan Members opposite, to do what they can to improve the condition of London; and we most earnestly press upon Her Majestys' Government, at as early a date as they conveniently can, to introduce further legislation to consolidate and amend the several Public Health and Dwellings Acts, and to provide that in all cases of a displacement of population under compulsory powers, it shall be obligatory that adequate new accommodation shall be supplied for those who were thus ejected.

*Mr. S. C. BUXTON (Tower Hamlets): It seems to have rather hurt the feelings of hon. Members opposite to describe them as docile and inoffensive. I had thought it rather a complimentary term as applied to those private Members who sit behind the Treasury Bench, and who are apt to be very docile and inoffensive, for if they get restive they are told in very strong language that the Government do not like their conduct at all. I am rather sorry that this debate has been confined entirely to the Housing of the Working Classes. I raise a strong protest against the Government, because all reference to Metropolitan questions has been omitted from the Queen's Speech, and especially in regard to the emphatic promise made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who went to Stratford to talk, not of questions of administration, as the President of the Local Government Board seems to suggest, but of legislation. He went there to counteract the speeches of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. Hailing from the aristocratic quarter of St. Georges, Hanover Square, he sneered at the programme of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) as the Clerkenwell-cum-Limehouse programme; and at Stratford he declared, as a responsible Member of the Government, that not only was the Government possessed of all the knowledge and all the proper feeling in this matter, but that they also possessed the capability of giving effect to these questions to which reference has been made. My hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch Division has already quoted one of the emphatic promises made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in that particular speech. But I should like to trouble the House by repeating another portion of the speech, because it seems to me to make it more just that Metropolitan Members on this side of the House should raise a short debate on Metropolitan questions on this occasion. He said, "After stating that the Unionist Party were better qualified than any other to deal with these Metropolitan questions, the Chancellor of the Exchequer went on to say—

> "The Unionist Party do not propose to postpone for ten years, or to the beginning of the next century, measures necessary or desirable for the improvement of the people. We believe that the time for dealing with these important questions is not ten years hence, but yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow."

And now, while we are asking the Government for bread we receive a stone. We ask for legislation and the Government talk of administration. It is true there are many matters in regard to which the position of the working-classes can be improved by improved administration, but there are also a vast number of questions affecting the Metropolis to which reference has been made that can only be dealt with by legislation. The power to deal with markets and water should be handed over to the County Councils, and we desire also that such matters as the incidence of taxation, the equalization of Poor Rates, and the question of Leaseholds, should also be taken into consideration, and that, if possible, the Government should do something with regard to them. What, I ask, is mentioned in the Queen's Speech in response to the promise of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is true that the right hon. Gentleman has said that the Government means to

introduce Bills, although they are not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne; but hon. Members know that the position given to the measures mentioned in the Queen's Speech is everything, and that precedence in that Speech is a proportionate guarantee on the part of the Government of the pressure they will exercise to pass them. We are told that the Defences of the Empire ought to be strengthened, and that, no doubt, worthily deserves the first place in the Queen's Speech; and then Her Majesty's Government are going to carry out the policy of "simultaneity and spontaneity" by neglecting Ireland, and bringing in a measure of local Government for Scotland. But, beyond this, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not desirous of having his name as a great finance Minister omitted from the programme, has promised to bring forward finance measures, which may have the effect of somewhat repairing the damage done to his reputation by the introduction of the Wheel Tax. He promised that the Metropolis should receive special attention; but we find that all questions affecting the Metropolis are excluded from the Queen's Speech; although at the same time the right hon. Gentleman is going to devote a portion of the Session to the settlement of the coinage question—the present condition of which has existed for scores of years without serious harm to the country, and might continue for scores of years longer without any further detriment. The right hon. Gentleman is going to do this, and acquire all the honour and glory that may arise therefrom, to the exclusion of social questions of infinitely greater importance. These questions and that of the Sugar Bounties, which is also to be discussed, will, together with the Estimates, make up the sum and substance of any measures which the Government may hope to carry during the short coming Session. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. Stuart) has already pointed out the extreme urgency of the questions to which I have already referred. They have been considered and discussed over and over again, and it is time we endeavoured to legislate upon them. The Metropolitan Members depended on the promise of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and now are bitterly disappointed at finding the neglect with which Metropolitan questions are to be treated. The hon. Member for Chelsea (Mr. Whitmore) has said we, in London, ought not to have exceptional legislation; but that is not asked for, and I think we ought to remember that until now we have not had any great representative authority fitted to decide many of the questions that have been awaiting solution in the Metropolis. We now have such a body, and we thank the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board for it, and I think that we are at one in believing that that will prove a great boon to the London ratepayer. Having, therefore, this body in existence, we say that all questions as to water, markets, taxation, and so forth, ought to and can without any difficulty be legislated upon and handed over to the keeping and administration of that great body who may be expected to deal with them to the vast advantage of the Metropolis. I have only risen as a Metropolitan Member to protest, as I do most emphatically, against the absolute breach of the emphatic promise made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is perhaps the most important Member of Her Majesty's Government—a breach that will not be easily forgotten, and which we shall be glad if he will explain.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): In reference to what has been urged by hon. Members opposite I would point out that the House ought to consider what is possible and what is impossible of accomplishment; and I would also say that, as the House is doubtless well aware, if there were less talk there would be more work. The question of sanitary dwellings for the artizans is one in which many of us are interested, but we have avoided speaking at length on the subject, because we have been anxious not to waste the time of the House, and because we hope that there may be time to go into it and other important matters this Session. We all know how hard the House was worked during the past Session, and can sympathize with the position of those who are engaged in the work of the Government, because they have to attend to their various official duties as well as to what they have to do in the House, and it

is impossible that they can get through their work satisfactorily if the same strain is put upon them as that which they had to bear last Session. In conclusion, I will only say that I hope the Local Government Board will not give new powers to the County Councils till they see how those bodies exercise the powers they already possess.

*Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I will endeavour to imitate the excellent example in brevity set to the House by the hon. Member who has just sat down. I think it scarcely becomes a Metropolitan Member to speak of the vast Metropolitan population of 5,000,000 as that of a mere district—for if it can be called a district it is one that has almost as many inhabitants as the whole of Ireland. It has been suggested that measures should be brought in by Her Majesty's Government giving by further legislation extended powers to the new governing authority of the Metropolis; and it has also been said that these matters should be dealt with by Bills brought in by private Members. It seems to me to be impossible that such a matter as that which we are discussing to-night could be dealt with by any hon. Private Member in a Bill. The interests involved are too vast, the expenditure involved is too enormous, and the question of principle as to the mode of taxation which should apply too intricate to render it possible for any effective measure on the subject to be thus brought in and carried. I put it to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary last Session, and I remind him now, that there is an urgent necessity for an immediate consolidation of the Acts relating to this and kindred subjects. At the present moment many of the Acts apply sectionally to the various Vestries, and I am glad to find that the powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works are to be transferred to the new governing body; but what we ask, and what would be of more advantage to the Metropolis and the country generally, is that all the Acts dealing with sanitation and the dwellings of the working classes should be consolidated. Then, and then only, will the local authorities, not only of London, but all over the country be able properly to put in force the powers conferred upon them. I will not apologize to the Board of Works nor to the Vestries for what has been said about the manner in which they have discharged their duties; but I think I may say this on their behalf—that the authority of the two have overlapped to such an extent that the Vestries have not known where they might go and where not. If the Government will only now take time by the forelock and consolidate and amend the Acts referred to with regard to the whole of London, I think it would be easy to carry such a measure through this House. With regard to the regulations which are laid upon the Table of this House, I would point out that they are usually passed without the House having any power to deal with them, it being only with the greatest difficulty that hon. Members can obtain copies of them. I am not now complaining of the authorities of the House in any department, because they have always granted me any copy I have asked for; but a Member must have some prior knowledge as to what is going to be done, or as to what is necessary to be done, before he is able to seek for a copy of the regulations, the result being that very few ever see a copy of them until they have become law. We know what a terrible muddle the Post Office got into last Session with regard to the regulations affecting the Post Office Savings Bank. I hope the Government will see the importance of dealing with the question of consolidating the Acts I have spoken of by bringing in a Consolidation Bill, and I can promise that we on this side of the House will give to a measure of this kind the same facilities, and even greater facilities than were given by the Metropolitan Members when the Local Government Bill was before the House. We are now prevented from discussing the question in a comprehensive manner, but I am persuaded that if the right hon. Gentleman opposite would bring in a Bill every effort would be made on this side to help him. Having had some little experience in connection with questions of this kind, I am satisfied that it is important we should have a proper code of laws in our hands and be able to enforce it. I would, therefore, urge upon Her Majesty's Government the propriety of bringing in at once a comprehensive measure dealing with the whole of the question.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to enter a respectful protest against being described as a Radical because I am in favour of sanitary reform. Of twelve Statutes which have been placed on the Statute Book dealing with the housing of the working classes in the course of the last thirty-eight years, five have been carried by private Members, two by Liberal Governments, and five by Conservative Governments—four by Lord Basing and one by Lord Salisbury. I hope that hon. Gentlemen opposite will communicate the enthusiasm which they have derived from the redistribution of seats, to their Leaders, who have hitherto displayed a singular indifference to the subject. A demand has been made by the hon. Member for Hoxton (Mr. Stuart) and the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) for the passing of a Consolidating Act, and I must say that that demand is a very reasonable one. Hon. Members know how difficult it is to read and construe together two amending Acts of Parliament, but when they have to deal with twelve—[MR. HOWELL: Thirty]—the difficulty is almost insurmountable. Every one overlaps and amends the other, and the task, difficult as it would be to a lawyer, becomes insuperable to a Vestry. I think that Vestries ought not to be able to plead, as they do, their ignorance of the law, but as the law now stands the Local Government Board itself is obliged to admit that that ignorance is justifiable. What we want in London is not so much new law as new local authorities to carry out the existing law, and I agree with the hon. Member for St. Pancras that the sooner District Councils are created the better. I would, however, suggest to the hon. Member, in the most friendly spirit, that until District Councils are created it would be well for the new London County Council to do its best to impart a new spirit into the existing Vestries. The Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor made one or two recommendations which have not been carried out in Lord Salisbury's Act; but I think they are of so much importance that, if the House will allow me, I should like to press them upon the attention of the Home Secretary. First of all, there are the sanitary inspectors of the parishes. I think there ought to be something like an equal proportion of sanitary inspectors to the population. In London we have this experience. In St. James', Westminster, and St. Giles' there is one inspector to 9,000 population; in Islington and St. Pancras, one to 60,000; Greenwich, one to 65,000; Bermondsey, one to 85,000; and Mile End, one to 105,000 of the population, thus showing that in some districts of London there are too few inspectors, while in others there are too many. Then, again, the sanitary inspectors of the parishes ought to be competent men, who know something of the science of sanitation and of the art of building. They ought not to be appointed to posts of this kind because they know something of the jewellery trade, or because, in the opinion of the Vestries, they are men of common sense. They ought to have manifested some knowledge and fitness which specially qualified them for the position. One word with regard to the medical officers of health. I was glad to hear from my right hon. Friend that they are to be required to send in Reports to the Local Government Board, but there is another point which I consider to be most essential, and it is that the medical officer of health should reside in the district. It transpired before the Royal Commission that in some of the worst neighbourhoods in London the medical officer of health was some famous physician who lived and practised in another part of the town. Then, again, I think the medical officers of health ought to be appointed by the Local Government Board, and that they should not be dependent upon the Vestries. Very recently a medical officer named Murphy felt himself obliged to resign owing to his strained relations with the Vestry, for no other reason than that he had done his duty. There is only one other recommendation of the Royal Commission to which I wish to refer, and it is that, when a dispute occurs between the central and the local authorities (which, in future, I imagine will be the County Council and the District Council) as to whose duty it is to do a particular piece of work, the Local Government Board should immediately appoint an arbitrator to do the work. From our experience of the past we know how fruitful have been disputes as to who ought to do the work. I feel sure that if the President of the Board of Trade or the Home Secre-

tary—I do not know in whose Department it would come—would introduce a consolidating and amending Sanitary Act, it would not only add to his reputation, but would secure the gratitude of the people of the Metropolis.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I concur with the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Baumann) that many Members on this side of the House fully recognize the importance of the subject which has been introduced by the hon. Member for Hackney. Everyone who has any knowledge of the intricacies of sanitary law must recognize the great advantage which must be derived from a consolidation of the existing Statutes on the subject. For my own part, I hope the time is not far distant when the Government will see their way to the introduction of a measure of this kind; but the chief object with which I have risen was to show that the Government are not blameable for any inattention to the wants of the Metropolis. I hold in my hand a Report of the Mansion House Council on the Dwellings of the Poor. It is not necessary to speak of the representative character of that Council, which is presided over by the Lord Mayor, and is composed of members of all political Parties. In their Report the Council acknowledge the deep sense of their obligations to the present Administration, and to the permanent officials of the Local Government Board and the Home Office, for the recognition of the Council's efforts to improve the dwellings of the poor, and they add that without such support the action of the Council would be almost futile. The Report points out the vast field which exists for improvement in relation to sanitary science, and is a practical acknowledgment of the work which has been done by the Government and the Home Office. At the same time, I feel that the present position of the law adds greatly to the difficulty of dealing with the subject, and I would venture, with full assurance, to express a hope that the Government will give their early attention to the matter.

*MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): Not being a Metropolitan Member, I should not have ventured to interpose in the debate had it not been my fortune for a long series of years to take an active part in sanitary questions in the parish of Paddington in West London. It is a common phrase, both in and out of the House, that legislation by reference to other Statutes is inconvenient and mischievous, and makes it impossible to interpret a Statute or to administer the law with satisfaction. In order to understand the Act which followed the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, it is necessary that you should have some 40 or 50 Statutes by your side. I myself, in endeavouring to understand the Act for the Housing of the Working Classes, 1885, and to deal with it, have found myself surrounded by a perfect library of Statutes. Yet it is a question affecting the health, happiness, and well-being of the people, and, in my opinion, the law dealing with questions of such great importance ought, at least, to be clear and intelligible, and perfectly free from obscurity and contradiction. In a summer ramble in France last year, I found that it is the custom of the Government of that country to place in the public institutions, week by week and month by month, an explanation of the various Statutes passed by the Legislature. I think this is an example which might be followed with great advantage in this country. If it were done by way of a memorandum, those who have to adminster the law would become comparatively familiar with it, and would have at hand some comprehensive view of the main enactments in reference to a particular subject. The consequence would be that enactments now recondite and unknown would become familiar to the people, and would be better carried into operation. Some complaint has been made of the obscurity of the Statutes as far as they apply to London, but that defect is entirely due to the action of the London Vestries. When Lord Basing was at the head of the Local Government Board, he introduced into the House of Commons a Consolidating Bill, but the Vestries unanimously opposed it, and with such effect, having the co-operation and assistance of the Metropolitan Members, that the Bill was withdrawn. I myself presided at a meeting of the Paddington Vestry convened for the purpose of discussing the Bill, but found it impossible to induce them to withdraw their opposition. The reason why the Vestries opposed the Bill was that they thought

its provisions would bring them more immediately under the control of the central authority, and they were unwilling to have compulsion put upon them. They therefore opposed the Bill, and the result has been to continue in London down to the present time the incongruous mass of Statutes which now exists. I hope that before long some attempt will be made to consolidate and simplify the law.

*MR. FIRTH (Dundee): I have no doubt that the hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. Powell) has touched the kernel of the difficulty under which we have been suffering in London—namely, the unwillingness of the local authorities to place themselves under Government control. I do not, however, think that the situation is as bad as it was before the passing of the Local Government Bill. But we are all looking forward with hope and expectation to the introduction by the Local Government Board of a District Council Bill on the same sound, democratic — I will not say Radical—lines as the measure for the establishment of County Councils last year, so that there may be constituted in London for the control of sanitary law a very different body from any which now exists. What we have hitherto suffered from has not been so much the want of law as the want of an authority able and willing to carry it out. The ability has sometimes been there when the willingness to carry out the law has been altogether absent. No Acts of Parliament will be sufficiently strong if the authority who is entrusted with the carrying of them out is incapable or unwilling to do so. The medical officers in London have complained of no central control, and there have been individual complaints, not always coming to the surface, that they have been obstructed in carrying out the excellent sanitary law which exists by the very authorities who appointed them. The Local Government Act of last year will remedy a good deal of that inconvenience; for no medical officer can in future be appointed by a Vestry, except under the clauses of the Public Health Act, which gives essential, if not complete, control to the Local Government Board, and special qualifications and fitness for the performance of the duties will hereafter have to be shown. The London County Council, who will pay half of the salaries, will have Reports sent up to them, and by their representatives they will have the opportunity of judging how far the work is properly performed. I apprehend that the action of an economical and intelligent Vestry will be to get their present officer to resign, so that he may be re-appointed, and the Vestry gain the advantage of receiving a moiety of the salary, and in that case the control will be vested in other hands. The London County Council are anxious and willing to infuse an entirely new spirit into the local management of the Metropolis; but there are some things which they cannot do, and which it would not be wise on their part to undertake. Looking, as we are, confidently to the introduction of a District Council Bill, we think we may be spared from attempting it, and until that measure is passed, from adding to the present difficulties of our task. I may say, in conclusion, that I sincerely trust that the Bill of the Government will give to the Central Council still more complete control, especially in matters affecting contagious diseases, which are so much bound up with the health of the Metropolis.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): The reason why I rise for the purpose of troubling the House upon the Licensing Question is the absence of all allusion to it in the Queen's Speech. I have received an intimation from the Speaker that the Amendment which I have placed upon the Paper cannot be moved, because certain Bills have been introduced which deal with the same subject. These Bills, however, only deal with the subject in particular localities, whereas my object is to deal with an evil which affects the kingdom as a whole.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is somewhat difficult to contend with the ingenuity of hon. Members in evading a plain rule of the House. If the hon. Baronet turns to the notice paper he will find a Liquor Traffic Local Option Bill, a Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill, a Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Ireland) Bill, and a Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill. The reason why I insist so strongly upon the observance of the rule is that, if hon. Members who have not been fortunate in the Ballot, and find their Bills not well placed for

arly discussion, are to be at liberty to anticipate the Debate upon their Bills by moving an Amendment to the Address, embodying the subject matter of those Bill, by merely prefixing the formula "We regret that no mention is made in the Speech of such and such a Bill," then the Debate on the Address might be illimitably extended.

SIR W. LAWSON: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for mentioning the matter to me, but I think that I shall be in order if I express my regret that the subject has not been mentioned in the Queen's Speech.

MR. SPEAKER: On the contrary, the hon. Gentleman will be quite out of order.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I must confess that I read the Speech from the Throne with a feeling of considerable disappointment. While mention is made of the development of the material resources of Ireland, no mention whatever is made of the development of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The people of the Highlands were made to believe, some time ago, that if they wanted Reform they had only to commit some act of lawlessness, and hence we have heard of a deer raid, which involved the sending of gunboats, the landing of soldiers, and the employment of a large body of police. By-and-bye, better counsels prevailed, and the law-abiding people were told that if they raised their grievances in a constitutional manner, they would get redress at the hands of the present Government. Accordingly, these people in the Highlands have been quiet ever since; they have been patient and long suffering under severe distress, but up to the present moment very little has been done by the Government for them with a view to improving their position. There is, therefore, a danger that the counsels of the extreme party, who advise overt acts of lawlessness as necessary to draw public attention to their grievances, may be adopted by the people. Last year the condition of the people in the Highlands was called attention to in an Amendment to the Address, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland, speaking on behalf of the Government, stated that he knew of no subject which more commanded the attention of the House, or which constituted a more fitting subject for an Amendment to the Address than the condition of the Crofters. I venture to say that that condition has not one whit improved, and there is no less reason for moving an Amendment to the Address on the present occasion than there was last year. Now, what is the condition of the people in the Islands and Highlands of Scotland? Take, for instance, the island of Lewis, which depends for the maintenance of its inhabitants entirely upon the fishing industry. The average rent of the Crofters in Lewis is said to be about three pounds, and many of them are under two pounds. That shows at once that the land is merely supplemental to the fishing industry, which is indeed the main support of the people there. Now, with regard to the fishing industry, a change came over it which accounts for the distress of the people. It was a change which entailed a very heavy loss to the poor fishermen, and it had relation to the manner in which they were remunerated. Previously to 1884, the fishermen were paid fixed wages for time-engagements. Owing to the change in the success of the fishing, the fish curers altered the mode of payment, and insisted that the fishermen should be remunerated by sharing in the profit or loss on the sale of the fish. I believe they were to receive about one-twelfth of the sum received for the fish. The result was that the fishermen, in many instances, received very little remuneration for their trouble, and so returned home with insufficient money to tide them over the winter. It was stated by the Commissioner appointed by the Government, that during the year 1886, a sum of not less than £40,000 was lost to the fishermen by the alteration in the mode of payment, and that a similar loss of £40,000 was anticipated in the year 1887. The distress, therefore, in Lewis had relation solely to the failure of the fishing industry. It is perfectly true, the Lord Advocate might say, that there is not the pinching necessity to-day that there was a year ago, but I must point out that the position of these people is very precarious, and it is so precarious that at times it has been necessary to exercise charity on their behalf. In the year 1883 it was found necessary to send them relief to the extent of seven or eight thousand pounds, owing to a single storm having swept over the district. Again, the

Government have been and are expending a sum of £10,000 with a view to the promotion of emigration from the district, and last year they passed an Act of Parliament authorizing the payment of £30,000 in aid of local rates on account of the distress. These facts show that there is a distress which requires some kind of remedy. Now, I anticipate that the £10,000 which the Government has obtained power to devote in aid of emigration, and the £30,000 which is given in aid of local taxation, will all be exhausted very shortly. Yet, will the condition of the people be any better than it was two years ago? I think it will not; on the contrary, it will be necessary for the Government to bring in fresh legislation to renew the grant of £30,000, and we are, therefore, entitled to find fault with the omission to refer to the matter in the Queen's Speech. To Ireland, which is in less poor circumstances than are the Highlands, you have references made in the Speech. Now, the first question to discuss is, whose duty is it to relieve this distress? Because upon that point turns the whole question of the policy of the Government. Now it is the duty of every civilized State to make provision for the support of those able-bodied men who are able and willing to work, but who cannot find employment. That is a recognized principle; if it were not, you would never be able to protect property and life. How does this country discharge itself of that obligation? In England you do it by imposing it upon the local ratepayers; you impose upon Boards of Guardians the responsibility of providing for the able-bodied poor. And in England, supposing that the able-bodied man leaves his family in distress, the Board of Guardians are bound to provide medical relief and attendance, but in Scotland the case is entirely different. There there is no legal provision whatever for compelling local ratepayers to provide for the able-bodied poor. You have, therefore, a clear distinction between England and Scotland. In the former case, the responsibility is imposed on the local ratepayers themselves. In Scotland, the Government not having discharged themselves of the responsibilities, it necessarily rests upon their own shoulders. In Scotland there is only one thing which a man may do. He may not beg, he may not steal, he may not commit suicide, he has no legal right to relief. The only thing he can lawfully do is to die from starvation. The failure of the law to provide relief for the able-bodied poor, therefore, leaves the responsibility upon the Central Government. How has the Government proceeded to discharge itself of that responsibility? It has accepted it, and it has acted upon it, for it has suggested a scheme of emigration and has spent money upon it. I am not going to discuss now the expediency of the policy of emigration. We will assume that it is a good enough policy, and that it is suitable to the district. I am not going to discuss whether the country is getting the best possible return for the £10,000 which is being spent in the matter of the emigration of the crofters. If the scheme of emigration is to be successful, one thing is certain, and that is, that the Crofters must be sent to Canada early in the year, so that they shall not arrive there later than the end of March. What was the result last year of sending them out later than that period? Why, the winter came upon them too soon, and very heavy expense and loss was occasioned. Now there is nobody to interfere with the Government arrangements, yet I venture to think that a considerable portion of the year will have elapsed before the remainder of the families are sent out. But supposing you do send these families out to Canada, how does it benefit the crofters who are left behind? I can quite understand it is an advantage to the emigrants themselves. We know that plenty of hard-working men have emigrated and made their way in life in other countries, and I know it is an advantage to a colony to get the hardy sons of Scotland working upon its soil. But I again ask, What effect does it have upon the people that are left behind? Those are the people we are mostly interested in. Certainly you get a given quantity of land made available for other tenants; but supposing you send out 70 families, the utmost land you get is that fetching a rental of £210 a year; and that is of very little use to the 27,000 inhabitants who are left behind. You have already been 12 months engaged on this work of emigration; it will probably occupy you another six months, and the result is that before

you finish the scheme the population will have increased by a larger number that the number you send out, and the country will be no better off that it was before. But you will tell us that you are spending £30,000 in aid of local taxation. Now, what in the world was the reason for giving this £30,000? Nobody but a Conservative Government would ever have done such a thing. You wonder how it is is that a Conservative Government makes no progress in Scotland: it is because when a Conservative Government is in power they never fail to adopt some reactionary policy in aid of the landlords. There never was a grosser case than this application of £30,000 of the public money, which was intended for the relief of the fishing industry, but of which fully one-half has gone direct into the pockets of the landlords, who, as you know, pay one-half of the rates. In fact, I think more than one-half has gone into the pockets of the landlords, because on crofts under a certain value the landlord pays the whole of the rates, and on other crofts the Commissioners of Supply have the power of fixing who shall pay the rates, and, as these Commissioners consist of large landed proprietors, they have relieved themselves of the burden and imposed it on the tenants. Remember that the failure of the fishing industry was the cause of the distress. In two years the fishermen lost £80,000 in wages, and what relief did you give them? You took away 70 of the best families, and not a single copper of the £30,000 granted for the relief of the people goes into their pockets, because they are so poor that they do dot pay taxes at the present moment, and therefore, the grant in aid of local taxation is of no advantage to them. And where does this £30,000 come from? It does not come out of the Imperial purse. Oh! no. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would never make such a proposal as that, but what he does do is to take it out of certain duties allocated to Scotland. I have pointed out the responsibility of dealing with distress in the United Kingdom; it is a responsibility imposed upon the Imperial Government; but it does seem strange to me that an Unionist Government should propose to treat this matter as one of different nationalities. The thing is simply ridiculous. I could understand it being done by another Government, but I cannot understand an Unionist Government being the very first to propose a national recognition of responsibility. If you are going to give us these national responsibilities in this way, then we shall want national powers as well; and our contention is that if there is occasion for giving extra relief to the poor districts of the Highlands, that relief should come out of the public purse and not out of duties allocated to Scotland. You are proposing remedial measures for Ireland, and we know that the cost of those measures will come out of the Imperial purse. You have a probate duty allocated to Ireland as well as to Scotland, but you do not take a single copper of that money to meet the exceptional distress in Ireland. Then why do you do it in the case of Scotland, if we are to be treated as a United country? I think it is contrary to all principle for the Government to relieve property of its natural burdens. I could quite conceive the relief of burdens which are payable by the tenant out of his industry, but when it comes to the question of burdens on property, you have no right to treat that in an exceptional manner, because people come into property either by succession or purchase. They take it with all its liabilities, as an investment, and the Government has no right to interfere for the relief of burdens on investments. What is the true remedy in this matter? I think we find the true remedy stated in a speech of the late Lord Advocate. He says that the only thing which has a prospect of success is the fishing industry on the West Coast of Scotland, if it can only be permanently established. It is not charity we want; it is not relief of the rates we want. We only want you to make the conditions of life such that these people may earn an honest living by honest industry; and if you do that, then the landlord will benefit, as well as the tenant, because the burden of the rates will be less. It is only by improving the condition of the people that you can justly relieve the landlords. Raise the people from their poverty, and then the landlord's property will increase in value. The measures we suggest are, in the first place, a survey of the banks, with regard to the habits of the fish and the different places in which they are to be

found, in order that the fishermen may have some knowledge of the grounds upon which they are fishing. Such a survey would cost £100 or £200, but we cannot get that money out of the Scotch office, which would readily pay to-morrow another £30,000 for the relief of the landlords from taxation. Next, we want harbours; the coast is naturally formed for harbours, and it would require but a very small amount of expenditure to put two or three harbours in very suitable places. Then we ask that there should be steamboat communication with the fishing villages, so as to give them direct communication with the mainland. And, fourthly, it is necessary that there should be a railway from Ullapool to Garve. The line would only have to be about 28 miles long; it could be made for about £100,000, and it would make all the difference in bringing fresh fish to market. After this will come the subsidiary question of railway rates, and we shall only ask, in that respect, that the rates for the carriage of fish shall be the same as those for the carriage of beer. We want no other protection than that. One thing which strikes me very forcibly is the similarity between our proposals and those which the Chief Secretary makes in respect to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman says, "We are going to have some public works: some drainage schemes," and then he talks of a State-aided railway. For what purpose is such a railway proposed? Not merely to improve the locality through which the railway will pass, but also for the purpose of bringing the fishing villages into speedy communication with the markets. That is exactly what we want, and no one who knows anything about the North of Scotland will deny that that district is sadly in want of development. We simply ask that we should be treated as part of the United Kingdom. We do not want exceptional treatment. We ask that if poverty exists in Scotland it shall be dealt with in the same way that poverty is dealt with in Ireland. I beg to move the Resolution which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

After paragraph 11, to insert the words, "Humbly to express to Your Majesty our regret that, whilst reference is made in Your Most Gracious Speech to our early attention being asked to measures for developing the material resources of Ireland, no reference is made to the distress which prevails in many parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, nor to any measures for removing or alleviating said distress, or of developing the material resources of said Highlands and Islands."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire): I think the people of the Highlands and Islands are greatly indebted to the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division (Mr. Caldwell) for having brought this subject before the House. There is no doubt that the state of many parts of the Highlands and Islands is one deserving of the serious consideration of the House. The late Government appointed a Commission to inquire into the grievances of the Highland people, and that Commission reported fully upon various points. With regard to the deductions from rents which the present Crofters Commission fixed, I have nothing to say; but it is well to recollect that when the Crofters Bill was under discussion the Highland Members pressed upon the Government of the day the importance not merely that the Commission should have power to adjust and fix fair rents, but also to give more land to the crofters. Unless something is done in the latter direction, I assure the House there is no chance whatever of the Land question in the Highlands being satisfactorily settled. A petition presented to the proprietrix by the crofters of Lewis the other day shows very clearly what the people think upon the subject. In that petition they begged respectfully to apply for new crofts and pastures, in order to enable them to live and thrive in their native land; and they pointed out that their sheep land was waste before their eyes, and in the possession of an Englishman. The occupation of this land by them would, they said, enable a great number of them to live in peace and plenty. At present it was of no good, except to supply one man without a family. In conclusion, they pointed out that they were the true descendants of the ancient clansmen who had occupied the land of their island for eighteen centuries. The extension of holdings in the Highlands is a question which

the Government ought seriously to take into consideration. Again, there is the question of the fisheries upon the North-West and Northern Coasts of Scotland. That question was reported upon very strongly by Lord Napier's Commission, but I regret that very little has been done by Government upon the subject. It will be in the recollection of the House that last year the state of matters in the Lews was so serious that the Government sent an officer of the Board of Supervision to make inquiries and to report. The Commissioner's Report was to the effect that great misery prevailed, and I believe that it was the intention of the Government, if necessary, to take some steps to alleviate it, when most providentially the fishing suddenly improved, and the people were saved from great want and privation. But surely it is opposed to all reason that in these days a large population should be dependent upon an incident of this kind. The Lord Advocate may rely upon it that until the Fishery, Harbour, and Land questions are dealt with in a comprehensive measure the grievances of the Highlands and Islands will be constantly brought before him. My hon. Friend has spoken of the projected railway between Garve and Ullapool. The result of such a line will be that the fish caught will be many hours nearer market, and we all know that the demand for fresh fish in London is almost inexhaustible. This line of railway, therefore, will be of incalculable benefit. Then there is the question of lighthouses. To-night I put a Question to the President of the Board of Trade in reference to the necessity of setting up additional lights on the North-Western coast by night and day. There is considerably more traffic on the North-West Coast than formerly, but when additional lighthouses are asked for, it is said there is no money. I and my hon. Friends ask no more than our share of the attention of the Government. I assure the Government that, though there is a deal of distress and dissatisfaction in the Highlands, there is no place where there is more loyalty to the Crown. Taking all the facts into consideration, I hope the Government will grapple comprehensively with the grievances of the Highland people.

Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh

*Dr. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty): I am very pleased at the satisfactory speech in which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow has raised this subject. He spoke as strongly as any of us on this side of the House could, but I cannot help regarding it as a misfortune that the hon. Gentleman will not help us to place a Government in power who will do some of the things we want for the Highlands. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) has made several pilgrimages in the Highlands. He has told the Highlanders what they want and what they ought to have from the present Government; but he, at the same time, is very careful to tell the present Government that even if they do not do these things he will still stand by them. Any Member of the House who knows the Highlanders knows that they are not going to be caught by such chaff as that. I believe, and the Highlanders believe, in people who ask for good measures, and who will do all in their power to get them. Now, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caldwell) referred very properly to the treatment of Scotland in respect to the Probate Duty. The Scottish people are not getting full justice done them. Take the case of the Fishery Grant. The price of an ordinary fishing-boat is from £300 to £400, and yet the Government insist upon getting 25 per cent. of the amount from the people. You might just as well insist upon getting the whole amount. After much trouble we prevailed on the Government to take 10 per cent, and even that we found great difficulty in getting the people to provide, so great was their poverty. In the case of piers and harbours, too, the Government require 25 per cent, and I am sorry they have not seen their way to reduce the sum to 10 per cent. Some of my constituents have asked me what the Government will do by way of assisting them in the making of a pier, and I have been obliged to tell them that, according to the present regulations, they can only get so much from the Government. I know their answer will be, "You might as well ask us to raise as many millions as you do hundreds." Reference has been made to emigration. Unquestion-

ably 99 per cent of the people you send away are improved, but it is not the people who have gone away that we have to deal with; it is the people who stay with you. The flower of the people emigrate, and leave at home the poor and weak and the miserable. So much the worse for you when you come to want defenders for the country. One matter of great importance has been alluded to by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh), and that is the construction of a new railway on the West Coast of Scotland. The fishing grounds about the Island of Lewis are of the very best, and might be largely developed if the communication with the great centres of population were improved. The Chief Secretary for Ireland has expressed the wish of the Government to give facilities for railway and other communication in Ireland. I at once fastened upon that statement, and thought that, if Ireland was to get such advantage, we in the North of Scotland would stand a similar chance. But even in the matter of postal facilities, instead of getting increased facilities, we find those we have already enjoyed being cut off, on the ground, according to the Postmaster General, that the service does not pay. It is these things which lead to a great deal of indignation amongst the people; it is these things that lead to the demand in Scotland for Home Rule.

*COLONEL MALCOLM (Argyllshire): I think that nothing illustrates the difficulty of dealing with this subject more completely than the difference between the views of the Mover and the Seconder of the Amendment. The hon. Member for St. Rollox (Mr. Caldwell) said that the people of the Lews depended on the fishing, and not on the land, whereas the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) said that the land was the principal source of the people's livelihood. Both hon. Gentlemen were to a certain extent right, but what, however, I want to allude to more particularly is the propositions which were made by the hon. Member for St. Rollox by way of amending the position of these poor people. In the first place, he proposed the establishment of a permanent and successful fishery. I only wish the hon. Gentleman, or anyone else, could devise the means of establishing a permanent and successful fishery; it would save those who have to do with the districts particularly affected a great deal of trouble. I am afraid that, however skilful the Government may be, they will not be able to devise such a scheme. But they may do a good deal towards rendering the fishery more successful, and in that way I cordially agree with the hon. Member that the amount of money spent, particularly, on harbours in suitable positions, would be of the greatest value. I think if it can be proved—and I am certain there are many ports on the West Coast of Scotland where it can be proved—that these harbours would be of the greatest service, and where endeavours ought to be made to construct them they ought to be harbours of refuge, because what we really want is shelter for the vessels and boats—places where they can lie afloat. Consequently the refuge form of breakwater will answer all purposes. It is true that the fishermen have not money to spend upon these harbours beforehand, but they are perfectly willing to pay fair dues for the use of them. I think that if careful inquiries were made by the Government, or by whatever branch of the Government would have to lend the money, it would be found that there was a sufficient guarantee that the money would be repaid in the course of years. As regards the projected railway, I have no doubt that that also would be of great benefit, but I am afraid it would be hardly fair to pick out one particular line when there are other lines at present being promoted by private individuals, and also seeking to reach the West Coast, though not going as far as Ullapool. Again, there is no doubt that the increase of telegraphic communication through the Highlands, and the increase of coast communication by means of regular steamers, are two of the most ready ways of removing a good deal of the difficulty that we labour under in bringing fresh fish to market. In encouraging increased communication of this sort, the Government would confer a very great benefit on the whole system. As regards rates, I am afraid the answer of the Railway Companies would be that if for fish they were to charge the same rate as for beer, then the two commodities must be despatched at an equal rate of speed, and then I

fancy that by the time the fish arrived at any large central market it would most likely be seized and condemned as unfit for human food. I do hope this discussion will be of service in calling attention to the facts, and that the Government will consider how best it can invest and get the safest return for its money, in alleviating the distress that undoubtedly exists.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn): I think that in one respect the people of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are very fortunate. They seem to have attracted the attention and notice of the Liberal Unionist Party, and I think that any section of the human race who have done that are to be congratulated. I imagine that this Motion was thought of and brought into existence on a recent tour in Scotland of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, because I noticed that at the many banquets at which the right hon. Gentleman was entertained promises were made to the Scotch people—bribes of all kinds, sorts, and descriptions were held out to them to secure their good-will. It is rather strange that the chief actor in the Scottish drama of Liberal Unionist progress is not present—I mean the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; and after the speeches he made only a fortnight ago, I confess I am very much surprised that this distinguished ornament of the Liberal Unionist Party is not with us to support the very excellent objects of the Motion now under discussion. We must endeavour to get on without his presence. I certainly do think that this Motion is one which, coming from whatever quarter it may, ought to receive our cordial support. I feel myself the greatest disappointment that Her Majesty's gracious Speech from the Throne contains no reference to Scotland. We all know the different attempts which have been made to get Her Majesty's Government to deal seriously with Scotch business. We endeavoured in every way to do this last Session. We brought forward Motions without end—on the Estimates and otherwise—for this purpose, and we were always told that this was to be a Scotch Session. Well, the Scotch business spoken of in the Queen's Speech is, it seems, simply to be the well-worn Scotch University Bill which we have all heard of so often, and this promise of Local Government. We are, certainly, now dealing with a proposal which ought to impress upon Her Majesty's Government the importance of dealing more particularly and more seriously with Scotch business, and of taking it up in a statesmanlike manner, and not leaving it to take its chance, as, according to my experience, the House of Commons always has done. What does the Motion propose? It has reference to a state of affairs as to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland; and here I have some difficulty. In the few observations I have to trouble the House with I shall have to speak of certain districts which do not, I believe, come in what are called "the Highlands and Islands of Scotland." There is great difference of opinion amongst Scotch people as to where the Highlands of Scotland begin and where they end; and I trust, therefore, that you, Mr. Speaker, may not think it necessary to call me to order if I refer to parts of Scotland which, by many people, are not regarded as in the Highlands, so that there may be no doubt upon this question. I propose to move an Amendment to leave out from the Motion before the House the words "Highlands and Islands," so that the Motion will be made to deal generally with Scotland without restraint at all. The hon. Gentleman who introduced this matter pointed out the condition of the Highlands and Islands, and how much is required to be done there. It is in connection with the condition of these parts of Scotland that the fishing industry has been so much spoken of. That industry, I would point out, is not altogether confined to the Highlands and Islands. There are hundreds and thousands of fishermen, I might say, in other counties beyond those usually regarded as in the Highlands and Islands — men whom I imagine require quite as much care and quite as much looking after as the fishermen in any other part of the country. There are, for instance, the fishermen of Aberdeen, of the Moray Firth, and of the South Coast, all of whom, I venture to think, suffer from the want of beneficial legislation. I have drawn the attention of the Government to this matter, but hitherto without success. I do not suppose there is much to be hoped from

the present Government, or even from an ordinary Liberal Government—because in this matter I have to complain of the inaction of both Parties. I think they have both shut their eyes to the necessity for legislation in the interest of the fishing industry. But I am of a hopeful disposition, and I trust that by constantly bringing forward these questions something at length may be done. There is a difficulty as to bringing fish to market. I should have expected to have seen in Her Majesty's Speech some such passage as this—"The condition of the fishing industry is most unsatisfactory, because, whereas it is found that the fishermen get a very small price for their fish, it is also found that the consumer pays for it an exorbitant and extravagant price." I venture to think that there is no more important question connected with the fishing industry and the supply of food to this country than this, and I cannot imagine how time could be better occupied by a Special Commission than in considering how the difficulties surrounding this question can be successfully grappled with. If you go to the fishing piers, where the fish are brought for sale, you can often buy a large cod fish for ninepence. [*Laughter.*] The Lord Advocate laughs at that, but I can assure him that I am not exaggerating in the slightest degree, and that I can prove what I say. Soles and haddocks are sold at proportionate prices. So much for the fishermen. When, however, you go to Edinburgh, or any other large town, the prices you have to pay for fish are grossly exorbitant, compared with the amounts the fishermen receive, and I maintain that this is a most important subject, and that the Government ought to inquire into it, to find out how it all comes to pass. Discussions have occurred as to how it does come to pass. The railway authorities, of whom there are a large number in this House, tell us that it is not their fault. They say that they carry their fish in the most economical manner, and they and other hon. Gentlemen, representing other businesses, say that the fault lies with the Billingsgate ring. Well, be that as it may, I contend that we ought to have some Select Committee or Royal Commission to inquire into the matter, and get at the bottom of it. The Government is in a state of paralysis on the matter. They have done nothing, and, so far as we know, they intend to do nothing. Then there is another question of vast importance—namely, that of harbours for fishermen. Many hon. Members say that they experienced great difficulty in getting money in respect of small matters connected with the fishing industry, and I have experienced that difficulty also. I find not only a difficulty in getting money, but I find that the Government do not grasp the question as they ought, or take an adequate amount of trouble with regard to it. I asked a question the other day, and last Session I interrogated the Government as to what steps they intended to take to constitute local bodies of fishermen with power to deal with local fishery questions. I pressed the matter upon the attention of Ministers when the English Local Government Bill was before the House. I moved an Amendment to that measure, for the purpose of constituting in the maritime counties District Fishery Boards, who would have power to deal with the question of harbours, trawling, bait, harbour dues, and various other things with reference to the fishing industry. I regret to say, however, that through some informality this Amendment was ruled out of order. I was unable to get it under discussion either in the House itself or in Committee, and the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill said he would resist every attempt to introduce into it any such Amendment. Well, the Government did do something on this important question. They brought in a Bill—and it became law—for the purpose of forming District Fishery Councils in England. But the functions and powers given to these District Fishery Councils were very insufficient, and if these Councils are created it will be found that they will have little or nothing to do, and I wish now to caution the Lord Advocate against making the same mistake with regard to Scotland. I ask the Government this year to introduce, either as part of their Scotch Local Government Scheme, or as a separate measure, something to create a tribunal which will have power to deal with the local fishery interests in the various maritime counties of Scotland. It will be for the Government to consider how the subject can be best dealt with, but the point which is material is that, first of

all, when you create the Councils, you should let them be properly constituted and have upon them men elected by people of the district, and not nominated as they are under the Salmon Fisheries Bill of last year. Let the members of the Councils be properly elected, and give them a rating power over a certain area such as will be benefited by the fisheries; give them power to deal with the fishing harbours, and give them power over the trawling question and harbour dues, and give them power to make regulations for the sale of fish, and to deal with various other matters of that kind. Unless there are local fishery districts created by the Scotch Local Government Bill, I warn the Lord Advocate that I shall find it my duty to oppose that measure in every possible way, because I do not believe there can be a proper scheme without such a provision. I think in this I shall have the sympathy and support of many other hon. Members on this side of the House, and I must say I think the Government should be careful what they are about on this matter, as it is very possible that the Liberal Unionist Party may leave them at any moment. I also think that the Government should deal with the Land question of Scotland. Certain charges of a very serious character have been brought against the Government as to their legislation in favour of landlords. I think that it is to be regretted that the legislation of last year gave the Scotch landlords such a large sum of money. Everyone knows that there is a pressing necessity for legislation on this question in Scotland; but what is the legislation which should have been proposed? Why, there are long leases in Scotland which bring about great trouble and disaster to the tenants on many estates, and the matter has been brought to the attention of the Government to no avail. This should be dealt with; but I am gradually coming to look upon every measure introduced by the Government, constituted as it is at present, as absolutely hopeless. It seems altogether a waste of time to attempt to get anything done; and with regard to what the Government do bring forward, I think we ought to speak very strongly. Their chief proposal as to land is to give £10,000 to emigration. Now, the hon. Gentleman who introduced the Amendment has said, and I think very truly—if he did not say it, at any rate I will say it—that the payment of that £10,000 is simply putting so much money into the pocket of Lady Matheson—and here I would tell the Government that we intend, or at least I, certainly, intend, to oppose that grant altogether, for the reason that the Government has selected certain parts of Scotland that they intend to benefit. Why is the estate of Lady Matheson only to be benefited by this grant? If you are to introduce a scheme of State-aided emigration—as to the policy of which I have grave doubts—I cannot understand why one estate should be mainly benefited. I could find, indeed I know at the present time, many persons who would be glad to receive £100 or £150 from the Government on loan to go to Canada and start a small settlement. But the Government say that that is not within the purview of their scheme, and they will not do it. Their attempt is a small patchwork attempt, which will do no good to anyone but the landlord. It is idle to say that it deserves even the name of administrative ability, let alone statesmanship. The plan will do little or no good, and will cause a great deal of jealousy and heart-burning to people who are not assisted, but who are left out in the cold. I cannot help feeling that one ought not to occupy the time of the House at greater length, but I am bound to say that this Motion raises questions which might lead one to speak at much greater length, because it raises points which affect the general legislation of the Government with regard to Scotch affairs. One might be induced to ask what it is the Government have done since they came into office as a Ministry. This Motion is a serious attack made by the Liberal Unionists upon the Government—an attack seriously entered upon and supported by most powerful arguments. The Leaders of the Liberal Unionist Party, I regret to see, are not in their places; but, no doubt, when they come in later on, we shall witness on their part a most determined and overwhelming attack made upon the Government. And now, finally, I have only to move the Amendment to which I have referred—though if it is likely to lead to inconvenience I will not press it. My proposal is to omit from the fourth

line of the Amendment the words "and the Highlands and Islands," and to omit from line 6 "the said Highlands and Islands," in order to insert there the word "Scotland."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "the Highlands and Islands of."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

MR. ANDERSON, again rising, withdrew his Amendment.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment," put, and agreed to.

Original Amendment again proposed.

*MR. C. GRAHAM: I would point out to the Lord Advocate that Scotch Members are practically at one with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caldwell), and that there exist in many cases, with which he is, I suppose, more familiar than I am myself, distress and want in these distant islands. In Lewis some of the families do not hold any stock whatever. Sometimes their whole capital consists of two hens, or two sheep, or something miserable of that sort. Really, when we hear of the proposals of Her Majesty's Government to take fabulous sums of public money to expend upon national defences, as I suppose we must call them, I cannot help thinking that, with an expression of opinion so united from the Scotch Members, we might at least have expected from Her Majesty's Government, represented in solitary or dual state upon the Treasury Bench, that there was some proposition to be submitted to this House for the relief of these unfortunate people. I will not refer to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I never could see the use of the Royal Commission. It is an agreeable way of spending time and wasting public money; and when you get it you apparently hold it in the recesses of public offices, and there the matter rests. We have heard some interesting remarks to-night from Members who sit on the Government benches, dealing with this question from a point of view which is absolutely novel to me. If I correctly interpret the remarks of the hon. Member for Argyleshire, a little blooming Arcadia exists in those spots to which he referred; but, after the strong remarks we have heard from those who represent the feelings of the crofting class of the population, I hope we shall have some expression of sympathy from the Lord Advocate and from Her Majesty's Government.

*MR. ANGUS SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): Mr. Speaker, I observe that the Amendment of the hon. Member proceeds upon the fact that certain concessions have been made to Ireland, and that there is no reason why the same concessions ought not to be extended to the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, seeing that the conditions in each case are similar. But I beg to point out that the voice of the inhabitants of the Highlands has not been any more listened to than the voice of the people of Ireland, and my hon. Friend might have pursued points of similarity further than he did. I have no very great hope that Her Majesty's Government will really undertake anything for the benefit of the people of the Highlands. We have brought the case before them on previous occasions, and they have so persistently refused to do anything, that I am afraid, as formerly, our labour will be in vain. Now, however, that the Party (Unionist) to which the hon. Member belongs brings the subject forward, I trust a better result will follow, for, if not, the people of the Highlands will be apt to say that one Party has as little influence in the House of Commons as another. If political gratitude is not altogether extinct in the bosoms of Her Majesty's Government, they will give consideration to what has been brought before them on this occasion, seeing that that the Amendment is proposed by the hon. Member for St. Rollox, and seconded by the hon. Member for Inverness-shire. The Member for St. Rollox stated that in his opinion the money given recently for the relief of taxation went entirely to the landlords. Of course, we know very well that nearly everything undertaken in the Highlands has been for the benefit of the landlord class. That is what we complain of. Though the landlords are numerically few, everything done for the Highlands goes to their benefit. The people of the Highlands and Islands declare that the Government have persistently kept before them emigration and nothing else, so that the policy which has been

pointed out by the hon. Member for St. Rollox is just the complement of the other policy of emigration. A great deal has been said with regard to the construction of harbours, but that is incompatible with the policy of Her Majesty's Government, because, if the people are expatriated, what is the use of constructing harbours? They would be of no good in the world unless the people had access to the only means of livelihood within their reach. The Amendment expresses regret at the absence of any policy for the development of the material resources of the Highlands. I state that the first material resource of the people is the land, and until something is done to bring back the people driven from it, there is no use in constructing harbours. I admit that a policy of building harbours might be wisely undertaken if concurrent with a redistribution of the land. There is no doubt that were such a policy adopted with regard to the land, there would be ample scope and need for erecting harbours and developing the fisheries. It is vain and idle to say that the Highlands are congested. Undoubtedly, they are congested in certain localities; but the question is, Are they congested as a whole? In a country where there are eight square miles for every man, woman, and child, it is absurd to say that it is congested. Something has been said about the loyalty of the people of the Highlands. They have been loyal; but what reward has their loyalty met? It is perfectly well-known to the Lord Advocate and the Government that there is no body of people of the same small numerical strength who have done more to build up the Empire than the people of the Highlands, and their reward has been that they have been driven out before wild beasts and sheep. What we wish to see is a reversal of this policy. It is of no use Her Majesty's Government tinkering the question. The Royal Commission said, that though the question of rent was brought before them it was never brought before them in the same degree as want of land. Notwithstanding that the complaints were not about the rents, yet the rents have been reduced on the average from 30 to 50 per cent. What we want is that Her Majesty's Government should recognize that the Commission they appointed has made the best statement of the Highland question that has ever been given, and that is the statement of the Highland question given by the people themselves. The hon. Member for Argyleshire called attention to the want of telegraphic and postal communications. I would beg to point out to him that he himself supports a Government which, instead of increasing, has actually lessened those communications, and they are less in 1889 than they were in 1887. It is a strange commentary upon the speech of the hon. Member, that three weeks ago the post-office and telegraph office were shut up at Melvich, in Sutherlandshire, where a population of 700 people were dependent upon them, and the people now, if they want a postage stamp have to go several miles. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will take that matter into consideration. With regard to the question of harbours and the development of the material resources of the Western Highlands, I wish to point out that it will be useless to attempt to grapple with this question unless the Government recognize the claims of the people. You have given the Court power to deal with rents; why not give them power to deal with the distribution of land? If you do that, you will find less necessity for resorting to a system of grants, by which you will be only adding to the local taxation of the country and applying the money in the form of charity; and I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not suppose it to be an agreeable thing for any Highlander to appeal to charity in order that he may be maintained in his native land. I trust, therefore, that he will assist in preventing this reproach being cast on our people. I have great pleasure in supporting the Amendment.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson, Bute): The Amendment of the hon. Member for St. Rollox (Mr. Caldwell) does not profess to be advanced in a friendly spirit to the Government. On the contrary, the hon. Gentleman has stated, with a great deal of detail, various objections which he entertains to their administration in the Highlands; but at the same time he has urged these matters on the attention of the Government with manifest sincerity. I think, however, Her Majesty's Government may congratulate themselves on one feature of the discussion, and that is that we seem now, for the

first time for several years, to have entered upon a discussion on the condition of the Western Highlands which fairly realizes and grapples with the main and radical difficulties of the situation. We hear now, also for the first time, less about the disputes between landlords and tenants, and very much more about the development of the natural resources of the country. We have heard, to my satisfaction, and even to my surprise, encouraging words said about schemes of emigration. These are the features of the present debate which distinguish it from some of the gloomy discussions to which I have formerly listened, when the whole attention of Parliament has been endeavoured to be concentrated on that isolation of the Western Highlands from the rest of the world which has made it necessary that the landlord and tenant should fight it out between them for a mere patch of ground unworthy of the attention of either. We have heard much about the possibilities of development in the Western Highlands, in the efforts to bring about which I most completely sympathize; and I cannot but regret that the hon. Member of St. Rollox and even the hon. Member for the North Western Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Cuninghame Graham), should have adopted a hostile tone towards Her Majesty's Ministers, whom they might at least credit with a due interest in the country to which they belong. We are supposed to grudge half an hour to the consideration of even the most elementary feature in this great national question. Half an hour! Many half-hours and days have been spent in the consideration of what is one of the weak points of the social system in Scotland. It is to the interest of every one who values not only the peace but the credit of his country, that everything should be done that may be consistent with the duty ministers owe to the country generally to procure a satisfactory solution of this problem. I cannot emphasize too strongly the regret with which I have heard the suggestion that hon. Members of one party in this House are susceptible to the imputations that have been thrown out in regard to their action respecting this most delicate and important public question; but when I turn to the facts on which the hon. Member for St. Rollox has commented, I must say I do not think they justify the conclusion he asks this House to affirm. It is not the case that there has been any neglect on the part of the Government during the present year of the interests of this class of the community. On the contrary, exceptional measures have been adopted and are being carried out for the amelioration of the condition of the people in the West Highlands. But it is necessary in the first place to observe in this, as in all other questions of local administration, the principles that have been laid down for the action of the Government in dealing with matters relating to the relief of local distress. It is absolutely impossible that merely because a limited number of Her Majesty's subjects live in an isolated part of the country, and are unable to obtain a full subsistence for the land, the Government should therefore break up all the principles on which public money is administered. In dealing with public money where are we to stop, if we are to carry out this suggestion to the extent proposed? I am not aware of any instance in which the Government has, single-handed, engaged in the enterprize of developing the resources of any part of the country. On the contrary, what the Government requires to justify special intervention is not merely a certain measure of distress, but some indication of honest and zealous effort on the part of the district to improve its own fortunes. It is said that the Government has been remiss in not proposing a scheme for the development of railway communication. Far be it from me to suggest that that is not one of the first things that ought to be done in order to open up the country; but when we come to the action of the State with regard to it, I think this debate furnishes two shrewd illustrations of the impossibility of gratifying all the requests that are put forward by hon. Members. One came from this side of the House and the other from the opposite benches. The hon. Member for St. Rollox has referred to the construction of a railway from Garve to Ullapool as an enterprize that must be fraught with good results. But no sooner had he done so than my hon. and gallant friend, the Member for Argyll (Colonel Malcolm), with a vigilant regard to the interests of his country, explained that there is another line of railway of equal or surpassing merit.

Well, if it is held that the Government should engage in the endeavour to settle what should be done in regard to competing plans as to how best to start in developing the resources of the country, we should at once be landed in a region inaccessible even to the wisdom of Parliament. We are all agreed, and Parliament has resolved, that it is desirable facilities should be afforded to fishermen for obtaining new boats; and with this I most assuredly sympathize—but, at the same time, the idea was hardly mooted when the hon. Member for Elgin said it was a gross injustice that such a favour should be conferred only on the Highlands of Scotland, and expressed the anxiety of those whom he represents by moving an Amendment, for which he had some difficulty in finding a seconder. The hon. Member for St. Rollox must, I think, reconsider some of the propositions he has advanced in his eagerness to secure Imperial funds; but, before passing from this branch of the subject, I desire to emphasize the enormous importance of the matter. It is not on squabbles over narrow crofts of ground that the future of the Highlands rests. It is rather in the development of their aggregate resources. It is a past stage in the controversy, the suggestion that everyone must live on land which forbids enterprize as being impossible. With regard to emigration, that subject has been referred to in a more sanguine spirit than on former occasions. The subject of emigration is one which unquestionably opens a large field for discussion; but in it lies one of the hopes of the Highlands. The amount proposed to be given for this purpose last Session was £10,000; but he greatly errs who supposes that this sum, and the number of people who would thus be dealt with are at all indicative of the views of those who promote the emigration scheme. It is true, as the hon. Member for St. Rollox says, that the number of families dealt with in this way is small. Thirty families last year and 40 next year is only a small number; but the great object before the eyes of statesmen as regards the Western Highlands is to bring them into the main stream of human civilization and enterprize. When those persons emigrate they carry with them their language, their religion, their habits of mind, and that loyalty which hon. Members have rightly commented upon as belonging to the Scotch people. It is not, as was formerly supposed, a step into darkness and away from home—it is simply a step from one part of the country where there is less to another part of the Queen's dominions where there is more hope and larger opportunities. I will go further. Her Majesty's Government are most anxious that a Committee should sit on that subject to consider whether the experiment which has been made—for it was merely an experiment—has been so successful as to encourage the further prosecution and development of a system of emigration; but, owing to the action of Gentlemen on the other side, the reasons for which are not quite palpable, that Committee was never appointed. If it had been appointed we might have been one step nearer what has been to-night conceded to be a desirable object. I pass now from the question of emigration to another measure proposed and carried by Her Majesty's Government on which the hon. Member for St. Rollox has made some very sinister remarks. He has said that the distribution of the Probate Duty has not been conducted with due regard to the requirements of the different parts of the country. Let me remind him of certain facts. In the first place, the yield of the Probate Duty is devoted to those parts of the country whence those duties come. The hon. Gentleman founds upon the fact the complaint that the Government are not relieving what is local distress out of Imperial, but out of national resources. I should have thought the complaint would be the other way, and that it would have been said that we are taking from Imperial resources what ought to come out of local resources. The hon. Member is so extreme that he regrets that, stepping forward as the Government did from the area of the ordinary local revenue to the larger area of the kingdom of Scotland, they did not go further and derive the support from the whole of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom. I should like to know whether he thinks there would be a very hearty response from the people of other parts of the country if it were proposed, for instance, to levy a contribution on the urban districts of England for the relief of persons whose fortunes are so very

distinct as those with whom we are now dealing? The hon. Member actually goes the length of saying that it is the bounden duty of the State to find pecuniary relief, or in other words a livelihood for persons who have no occupation.

MR. CALDWELL: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent me. What I stated was that it is the duty of the State to provide for able-bodied persons willing to work who cannot find employment; that that is done in England by putting it upon the local rates, but that there is no such law in Scotland.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I do not think that I at all misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. He has stated his proposition a little more fully, but it does not differ, either from what the hon. Member had already said or from what I represented him as saying. Everyone is to receive relief from the State, who cannot find occupation. Find occupation—where? The hon. Gentleman, if he means anything, means that he is to stay at home and that he is not to look around him in the wider world for occupation. He said it is the bounden duty of every man in the poorest part of the Highlands to stay where he is, and it is the bounden duty of the State to support him in that ignoble resolution. It is no more the duty of the State to support such a man than it is to support any person who, born in a town, chooses to live on a doorstep because his father lived in the house of which that is the doorstep. The State has no right to interfere with the causes which compel the best of Her Majesty's subjects to go through her dominions in search of employment wherever it may be found, and it is the bounden duty of those who are responsible for the administration of affairs to speak plainly on that subject. The hon. Member proceeded a little further, and demurred to the bonus or premium to the Highlands, on the ground that it does not reach the right quarter, which it is desirable to relieve. I should like to say a word on that subject. The hon. Member began by saying that the distress is a fishing distress, owing to the failure of the herring fishing; and if that be so, I am inclined to agree that the best remedy would be to try and develop the herring fishery; but when the hon. Member says that there is an unfairness in the distribution of the bonus in the way of relief to local taxation, I hope I may be permitted to call attention to the facts of the case. In those parts of the Highlands in which there is distress, the condition of the landlord is as deplorable as that of the tenant. Those who pay rates are paying sums which would startle the minds of those who live in better-managed parts of the country. The landlords are the paymasters of those districts, and it is their resources which keep the social machine moving at all. If the attempt which has been made to drive capital out of those districts were to succeed, not only would those districts be insolvent, but very much worse than insolvent, and the social machine would not move at all. It is important to bear in mind that the pecuniary aid which we have an opportunity of giving now, and which we had an opportunity of giving last year, is not given as a favour or benefit to individuals, but in order to make the Local Government authorities keep the machine moving, and to remove the possibility of a deadlock. I will take as an instance the case of education. Is the House aware that in several parishes, sufficiently numerous to form a class, the education machine has completely broken down? Schools are kept going out of the rates, and it is a fact that in the class of parishes to which I refer the Parochial Board do not send the School Board the required amount, with the result that the School Board system has completely broken down, and it is deplorable to know that the rates which the Parochial Board thus failed to send to the School Board are so large an amount that it became a serious question for Her Majesty's Government whether they should not intervene to remove that difficulty and practical deadlock. I call the hon. Member's attention to the relief which has thus been given by Her Majesty's Government to the schools, because the hon. Member is not only a frequent speaker in the Highlands, but a still more frequent speaker on the subject of education. We have, by a scheme which has met with acceptance from the School Boards chiefly interested, been able to tide the School Boards over their difficulties. That

scheme combines greater administrative energy with greater economy. I grant that the relief must be temporary, but it has been of immense service to the Highlanders in enabling them to get over the difficulty as to the rates. Every year shows that education is one of the great means of opening up the Highlands and connecting it with the outer world, and I think the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire (Mr. A. Sutherland) will agree with me that we could not do a better service to the distressed counties than by helping them in the matter of education. What has happened is this. That although education has been rendered unpopular by the pressure upon the rates, every year shows that education is the great means of opening up the Highlands and connecting them with the outer world, and upon a limited scale efforts are been made to lighten local taxation and increasing and stimulating those energies of the people in other directions which have hitherto been allowed to be dormant in those parts of the country. It is a most disagreeable task for a Scotchman and a Scotch Minister to pass a rebuke upon any part of his own countrymen, but I consider it my duty to say that the difficulties of that part of the Highlands have not been met with that energy and enterprize that might have been displayed. These are plain words, but it is only right that they should be spoken, and I would rather express them myself than leave them to an English Member to speak. It is necessary that this part of the country of all others should not be encouraged to abandon the duty of self-help and sink into a state of inertness. The hon. Member for St. Rollox has pointed to matters with regard to which he charges the Government with inactivity, but I can assure the hon. Member that Her Majesty's Government have given the most anxious attention to the whole subject of the Highlands. I sympathize with all that the hon. Member has said on the subject of the fisheries, but the hon. Member also complained of the fishing-banks not having been surveyed. Has the hon. Member read the Report which was sent into the Fishery Board, and appended to their Report of 1887? I do not say it is a complete report: it recommends further investigation, but it shows that the subject is being investigated. The hon. Member himself has apparently not devoted any of his superfluous time to the minute study of those subjects which he alleges the Government have overlooked. Yet the Fishery Board is a department wide enough awake to the subject under consideration, and already they have made a Report upon it. The hon. Member also made a fantastic proposal for assimilating the fishery rates to the rates on beer. Certainly the connection is not very apparent. But has the hon. Member studied the schedule of rates under the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of last Session? (Mr. Caldwell shook his head). The hon. Member has not. Then it might be well for him to do so. If he had, and this Schedule was open to objection, why did he not call the attention of the Board of Trade or of this House to the subject? There again I say, if there be remissness anywhere, it is not with the Government. Complaint has been made as to the conditions on which loans for boats are to be made; but the revised rules provide for the advance of nine-tenths of the money required, and they are, therefore, certainly most liberal. With reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for Sutherlandshire, I can only say that there are some things in which no Government could satisfy local demands. In such cases, owing to Imperial duty, it might, on occasion of local crises, appear harsh to refuse, but it is nevertheless impossible to accede. I trust, however, that Her Majesty's Government will always be industrious in ascertaining the real wants and requirements of this district, and in carrying out their duties with regard to it as well as to the rest of the Empire, with a due regard to the advancement of the ultimate interests of the district and the approbation and co-operation of other districts not directly interested.

*Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow College): I am forced to admit the eloquence of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but he has failed to do anything except to convince me of his power as an advocate of how not to do it. He tells us the Government are doing their best to improve the condition of these unfortunate people, whose miserable condition he has described; but has he ever read the Report of the Crofters' Commission? He has not alluded to one-

fourth of the recommendations made by that Commission, and many of them might be carried out without the smallest difficulty. With regard to the improvement of the land tenure, something has, no doubt, been done; but it is a miserably small instalment of what is required. The Crofters Commission was wholly inadequate to cope with the work to be done, and it will be years before the arrears are overtaken. Did the right hon. Gentleman ever hear of deer forests? The Crofters Commission made strong recommendations on that subject, but the Government have done nothing. Then, again, the Crofters Commission recommended the reform of the Game Laws in certain directions, but nothing has been done. The same remark applies to the question of roads. The Commission laid great stress on the importance of improving the communications in the Highlands, and the grievous injustice of compelling the people to go 12 or 14 miles from any highway to pay rates for the maintenance of roads. The Commission pointed out how the Government might remedy this injustice, and yet the Government have done nothing. The same observation applies to the recommendation as to the establishment of training-ships in order to utilize the superabundant population. I am not going to discuss the merits of the emigration scheme. In the island of Lewis it would take a quarter of a million sterling on the Government scale to emigrate the surplus population, and that quarter of a million would buy up the whole island twice over at the present moment. The right hon. Gentleman felt it his duty to reprove the Highlanders for their want of energy and enterprize, but what do we find when they go abroad? We find that Highlanders, after the first generation, take the leading positions in our Colonies and develop the greatest energy of character. This is owing to the fact of their living under a different state of law from that which exists in the Highlands, where the energy is crushed out of them. Why should a man be enterprizing and improve his holding when he knows that by so doing he will have his rent increased? No doubt much of this has been remedied; but the work of the Crofters Commission ought to be facilitated by increasing the number of Commissioners. The Government are not stingy in the expenditure of public money in Scotland. When it is a case of sending a military expedition into Scotland, or of paying heavy fees to lawyers to prosecute crofters, the Government are quite ready to spend any amount. But when it comes to spending public money in such a way as to delevop the resources of Scotland, then they become stingy. The right hon. Gentleman did not see why the Highlanders should be exempted from that law of nature which applies to the rest of Her Majesty's subjects and not have to move about in search of employment. I accept his doctrine, but I must point out that the Government owe a duty to the Highlanders in that matter. Again, the Lord Advocate has spoken of the advantages of education, and the money given in aid of local taxation. But how did the debt in respect of education arise? I say that it arose in consequence of the extravagance of the English Education Department which required as a condition of the grants allowed that out-of-the-way districts should erect expensive schools, and consequently the parishes were obliged to incur debts. The Crofter Commission have, moreover, pointed out that the education sanctioned by the Government is mere parrot education, for children are instructed in a language which they do not understand. The Government consequently owe the Highland parishes some reparation, and certainly the children should receive an education, the nature of which would fit them for going abroad. The right hon. Gentleman fails to perceive that the beneficial action of the law of nature should equally apply to bankrupt landlords, and should result in compelling them to sell their estates. The best way to develop the resources of the Highlands would be to place the land in the hands of men who would devote their energies to tilling it and fertilizing it, and making out of the most unpromising and barren soil productive farms. I am the last man in the world who would advocate any deviation from the principles of political economy, but I recommend to the study of the right hon. Gentleman the Report of the Commission which sat to examine the Crofters question. They made a number of recommendations which would com-

mend themselves at once to him as equitable, feasible, and just, and I think if he will take steps to secure that they are carried into effect, will be the first Lord Advocate, at any rate in my time, who has shown any practical desire to develop the material resources of the Highlands. The Lord Advocate referred to exceptional measures which it was proposed to take. Did he intend to infer that the Government had anything further in store for us in the way of Scotch legislation beyond the grant of £30,000, and the Crofter Emigration Scheme? If so, I am sorry that he did not amplify that portion of his statement, and supplement the deficiency in the Address to the Crown. I ask him, when he speaks of the question of the fishing industry, will he deal with the law as to foreshore? The latter will not cost any money. My contention is that the terms on which the foreshore rights have been granted are absurd. He has promised a Bill dealing with fishing rights, but already from every side protests have come that the Bill which has been drafted for the purpose would, if carried, constitute a further robbery of public rights. I shall, on these grounds, support the motion of my hon. Friend.

*Mr. A. D. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): The right hon. Gentleman, the Lord Advocate, congratulated the House on the fact that this debate had not been taken up, as some previous debates had been on Scotch questions, with narratives of disputes between landlords and tenants; but, unfortunately, we shall never be able to get the landlord out of a Scotch debate. The most acute stage of the landlord and tenant dispute was, of course, set aside by the appointment of the Crofter Commission, which did something, at any rate, to alleviate the burdens of these people. Let me point out that, although the Government is going to spend a great deal of money on Ireland in a manner which will prevent any of the outlay being returned to the taxpayer, they do not propose to spend any money on Scotland, notwithstanding that the greatest necessity can be proved to exist in the Highlands. There were three Bills before the House last year dealing with arterial drainage in Ireland. I am one of the last men who would advocate any measure of State Socialism, and these proposals can only be described as such. Can any one say, the taxpayer is the least likely to get back the money which it is proposed to spend in Ireland upon arterial drainage? These are measures which will chiefly benefit the landlords, and to some small extent the occupiers, and nobody else; therefore the remarks which the Lord Advocate made against doing anything of the kind in the Highlands should have been prefaced by an explanation as to why it is the Government propose such measures in respect of Ireland. They have not done much to alleviate the condition of the people in the Highlands by this paltry scheme of emigration. It has been pointed out again and again in this House that emigration can be no real remedy, considering that the persons who can emigrate from the North of Scotland under the Government scheme comprise but a microscopic number compared with the annual increase in the population. Here is another anomaly. We are spending the taxpayers' money in sending Highlanders away from the North of Scotland, while we permit emigrants to come into London from all parts of the world, who shortly after they have arrived we are called upon to support out of the rates. Another thing which the Government have done is to return £30,000 out of the Probate Duties in aid of local taxation, but we do not know how that money is to be divided. A return has been promised to us, but we have nothing whatever before us. How much of it will go to the Island of Lewis? Whatever share goes there, will go into the pocket of one man, to whom all the land in the island belongs. We are apt sometimes to take a rather sentimental view of the landlords' position. Well, this particular landlord bought the island as a mercantile speculation, and it has proved an unfortunate speculation for him. I am sorry for him, but that is no reason why he should receive what is, in effect, a grant from the Government to help him out of his difficulty. We have been made familiar with mercantile misfortunes in past years, but we have never come across a similar case in which it has been proposed to hand over the taxpayers' money in aid of an unfortunate speculation. The Government have done something in the way of assisting fishermen with boats, and this,

with the emigration scheme and the return of £30,000 from the Probate Duties all that can be said in their favour. The right hon. Gentleman speaks as if everything which ought to be done in the Highlands necessitates putting his hand into the public purse. This is not so. Two matters have been alluded to by more than one speaker, namely, harbours and telegraphic extension. The latter has been of very great value indeed, but other things which would be of even greater value is the survey of some of the fishing banks, and a distribution at fair rents of the surplus lands in the Highlands, which at the present time are occupied by deer forests and sheep runs. The right hon. Gentleman twitted the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow because he had not referred to the appendix of the Fishery Report of 1887. He said that if we looked at that we should find that a great deal had been done in surveying the banks. Now I have referred to the report and cannot find a single word in it with respect to surveying the banks. The principal fishing bank lies off the Lews, and if it has been surveyed it must have been done within the last few months. Earlier surveys which have been made of that bank prove that it is one of the most remarkable fishing banks in the world, but it has not been surveyed with anything like precision. I think a war vessel was equipped for the purpose two or three years ago, but for some reason it was not sent on the duty. Now I understand it would take from £1,200 to £1,500 to do this work, but that is nothing as compared with the value of the services which would be rendered by an efficient survey. We can surely spare one vessel for this task, which could probably be completed in the course of the coming summer. The other recommendation which the Commissioners made was that the land in the Highlands should be divided. I do not mean that it should be taken from any person who now farms it, but what we ask is that it should be let to the tenants at fair rents, the same as has been done by the Crofters' Committee in the Island of Orkney. Those who cultivate the land should be able to obtain it at fair rents, and on no other terms do I ask that the land shall be dealt with. There is another point to which I wish to draw particular attention. The Scotch Land Commission commenced their work in 1886, they made a Report in 1887, and from that time until now no report has been laid upon the Table. I ask whether this long delay should have been allowed. Why, when the Irish Land Commission have to report monthly, should the Scotch Commission allow a period of two years to pass without presenting a report? The right hon. Gentleman himself promised that the report should be presented before the commencement of the present Session. He was perfectly well aware that a debate of some kind in reference to Scotch matters would be raised upon the Address, and I should like to ask whether that fact affords any explanation of the failure to produce that report.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: Will the hon. Member allow me to say I do not think I made any specific promise as to the date when the report would be issued. I could not possibly have done so. All I did was to undertake that a report should be presented as soon as the Commissioners were released from the arduous duties in which they were engaged in the Highlands, and I never entered into any pledge as to its being ready before Parliament met.

*MR. PROVAND: Are we to submit to these delays in the future? We had a Report in 1887, it is now 1889. If we get one now, are we to wait until 1891 before we get another?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I have no direct control over the Commissioners. They have been working very hard during the winter, and I believe when their Report is presented it will be seen that there can be no cause of complaint against them.

*MR. PROVAND: The right hon. Gentleman will see that we cannot ourselves communicate directly with the Commissioners, and certainly we are entitled to have some reason for the delay in the issue of the Report. I should certainly like to have some pledge as to when we are to get the next Report.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I was rather disappointed with the speech of the Lord Advocate. He made a very able and interesting speech to an interested and amused House, but I am afraid that the effect of the speech in the Highlands will be anything but interest-

ing and amusing to the unfortunate crofter population. We have got the usual dose of political economy well sugared, and we have had more than that—we have had from the right hon. Gentleman insult added to injury. We have had the Highland people lectured by the right hon. Gentleman, and all I can say is that when he goes down to his constituency, where there are a good many Highland men, he may expect that he will be treated in a very different fashion from the way in which he has been received there in the past, and quite different from his treatment in this House of Commons. What is the condition of affairs? You accuse these poor people of not doing anything to help themselves. You have been permitting the landlord to clear them away from the holdings they occupied to the worst lands on the seashore, and you have huddled them together under conditions which practically make living impossible. You have reduced them to poverty, and now you turn round and tell them that they ought to do a great deal more to help themselves. Help themselves! When they are paying 15s. in the £ for local rates—thanks to your interference—in districts where society has been going back to its primary elements, where the School Board and the Parochial Boards will not carry out the law, and where you are compelled to go for the purpose of getting rid of these local authorities, and of bringing into force the action of central authorities in lieu of them. The Lord Advocate stands in the position of a man who has knocked another man down, and then kicks him for falling. If you will take any township in the Highlands, you will find that nine-tenths of the population will compare favourably in point of civilization and morality with the inhabitants of any of the best agricultural districts in the Kingdom. You have made these people poor and miserable. Are they to remain poor and miserable as long as you like? Instead of reproaching them for their misfortunes, you should reproach those who have caused their misfortunes. I had hoped that this would have been a practical debate, and that we should have heard something as to what the Government intend doing. Now we know that they intend to do nothing. I have to tell the Government that if they intend that law and order shall be maintained in the Highlands, and if they do not wish to send gunboats there, as they have had to do in the past, they must carry out the laws that have been passed in this House in the spirit in which they were passed, and they must not hinder and prevent the beneficial legislation which Parliament has passed from being carried out in the Highlands. I will take one instance, which the Lord Advocate has tried to explain away, and that is the fact that the money which was voted to assist these poor people in getting boats for their fishing industry was long withheld from them. You would not give these poor people land. There are many cottars who have no land at all, and in some places cottars who have no land are more numerous than crofters who have land. Now, to that class you were going to lend money to develop the fishing industry, and to enable them to get boats. I had to call the attention of the House eighteen months after the Act was passed to the fact that not a single penny of that money had been devoted to the purpose for which it was voted. When pressure was brought to bear on the Treasury they agreed to grant nine-tenths. But immediately they did that they again betrayed the Highland people. They virtually said to the people, "We will only lend you this money if you have caulker-built boats; if you have the class of boats you require, we will only give seven-tenths." The people could not find the other three-tenths. These people have not got very fine boats. When they come in they have to run the boats up, and, therefore, they do not want heavy and expensive crafts. The Fishery Board, by manufacturing regulations against the spirit of the intention of the House, (because the intention of the Government last year was to lend nine-tenths of the money), tried to make the fishermen buy a class of boats which did not suit them. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman is entirely mistaken if he thinks that the question in the Highlands is a question either of fishing or of boats or of harbours or piers. It is a land question, and if the Lord Advocate wishes the question to turn more keenly than it has hitherto he has only to carry out his present policy. We have a right to ask the Government

of the day to carry out the clauses of the Crofters Act. There is a whole chapter in that Act containing many clauses having one purpose in view. There are four purposes of the Act. The first is to fix fair rents. We never complain very much about rack-renting in the Highlands. There has been rack-renting, but we have always said that this is not altogether a question of rack-renting. The Chief Secretary told us that the landlords of the Highlands never rack-rented. But the revelations of the Crofters Commission will show how much he knew about the Highlands. The majority of the rents in the Highlands have been reduced from £4 to £2. The average rent is 50s. a year, so that the people are paying less than one shilling a week for their holdings. But the reductions are practically of no avail while they have got their exhausted holdings. Round about their holdings there is plenty of land under sheep and deer, and they want that land, and they must have it if they are to live. Now I have no objection to emigration, providing the Government give us migration as well. The First Lord of the Treasury has refused to give us migration. There are congested districts in the Lews where you must have migration and emigration. We are quite willing to develop the waste land of our own country as well as the waste land of the Colonies. One thing necessary is that the clauses in the Crofter Act, under which the Commission has power to increase holdings, should be carried out. These clauses have never yet been carried out as far as I am aware of in the Highlands. Although the Act has been two and a-half years in operation, and the operation of the clauses is limited to five years, we are not aware of a single case of compulsory enlargement of the holdings. We are told that there is one case in Orkney, but we have no proof of it. Thousands of cases have come before the Court, and there is only one alleged case of enlargement. If there is no enlargement of holdings, you will soon find that instead of having anarchy in two or three parishes in the Lews, you will have the whole of the people in the townships in the Highlands paupers, and requiring to be controlled. I can tell the Lord Advocate that upon £5 crofts and upon £8 and £10 crofts there have grown men as able as himself. There are Surgeons General in the Army, men of all professions, men who have made fortunes as bank managers, who have been brought up and educated on £8 and £10 crofts. The bulk of the crofters who have crofts on which they can live and bring up a family are leaseholders, and yet they are deprived of the benefits of the Crofters Act. Take the case of the Clythe estate, in county Caithness. There are 150 crofters there, and the Land Court reduced their rents, on the average, 50 per cent, and wiped off arrears to the average of about 80 per cent. A great many of the rents were reduced as much as 66 per cent; but there are 32 leaseholders there, and the landlord is using the power of the law to evict the men, because they do not and cannot pay impossible rents. The rent of their neighbours has been reduced 50 per cent; but they are denied any reduction, simply because they happen to be leaseholders. Flesh and blood cannot stand it. If you are going to aid the landlords to evict leaseholders who are unable to pay impossible rents, then you will want more soldiers and more gunboats. There are landlords in the Highlands who, seeing that the Crofters Commission were reducing rents, have voluntarily offered reductions. But there are some bad landlords who will not voluntarily reduce the rents. I warn the Government that, if the present condition of things continues, they will require increased forces to keep the people under. It will be hard for some of us, whom you call agitators, to prevent the people from breaking the law. We have every desire to prevent our people from going too far; but we get no assistance from Her Majesty's Government.

MR. FINLAY (Inverness Burghs): I had not intended to take any part in this debate, and I rise now to say only a very few words in regard to some of the points touched upon in the discussion. I feel strongly that the state of things in the Western Highlands and Islands, and particularly in the Lews, is such as to constitute an actual danger. I feel that, wherever that state of things is realized, it will be felt that whatever can properly be done by the Government for the purpose

of giving relief and abating a condition which may result in the gravest consequences, ought to be done. Everyone who is interested in the Highlands must gratefully acknowledge the kindly and friendly terms in which the Lord Advocate referred to the state of things in the Western Highlands. I frankly acknowledge that the Government have in this matter, not merely given fair words, but they have devised that scheme in regard to education in the Highlands to which the Lord Advocate referred, and which is calculated to afford substantial relief and to secure increased efficiency. The merits of that scheme must be gratefully acknowledged by everyone who is conversant with the facts, but I feel that something more ought to be done, and done while there is yet time. The hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) has said that the land question is the question of questions in the Highlands. I agree with my hon. Friend in one sense, but the real land question in the Lews is that the land is not adequate to sustain the people.

DR. CLARK: The people have only one-half of the land now: give them the other half.

MR. FINLAY: I speak subject to correction, but I have always understood that in the Lews, even if every bit of land were parcelled out among the people, it would be absolutely inadequate to support them. If this is so, relief is not to be found in any scheme, however well devised, for migration in the Lews. Relief may be afforded to some extent by migration to other parts of the Highlands, and any well-devised scheme of that kind it would be the pleasure of every friend of the country to support. But let me call the attention of the hon. Member for Caithness to the fact that a very great practical difficulty will arise when the question of stocking the farms is brought into prominence. One must not overlook these difficulties and one must not, above all things, overlook the greatest difficulty of all, which no legislation can touch, viz.—that the land in the Western Highlands is not adequate to support the people. I think that everyone must feel that a well considered scheme of emigration is calculated to afford great relief to that part of the country. Government money may be very well spent upon fisheries. I believe that a rich return would be yielded for any money judiciously spent in the encouraging and developing of the fishing industry. One of the greatest needs of the Highlanders is that they should have ready means for bringing their fish to market. We are told it is not the practice of Government to subsidize lines of steamboats, or to aid by state grants the creation of railways, and the Lord Advocate brought the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Argyleshire (Colonel Malcolm), into sharp collision with the hon. Member for St. Rollox (Mr. Caldwell), by pointing out that one scheme of railway was patronized by one of them, while the other was ardent in support of a different scheme altogether. I confess the difficulty. It may be said that if you should encourage one scheme you will be asked to encourage other schemes, but I humbly submit to the Lord Advocate that it is right that the Government should choose judiciously between the competing schemes. Of course I recognize the maxims of political economy to which we have been referred, but I think that those maxims, though true in themselves, are sometimes misapplied and have not regard to the extreme need of the Highlands. To the fact that there is a source of wealth there which may be developed by Government money judiciously applied, I think that more may be done than the Government have yet done. I don't despair of their doing more, for I think the Lord Advocate's speech was not altogether discouraging. I don't think there is any country in Europe which would hesitate to incur expenditure if it was necessary, as I believe it is in the Highlands, for the purpose of averting what, if we are not wise in time, may ultimately develop into a serious national danger.

*MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, West): In one respect I disagree with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness (Mr. Findlay), but in the main I agree both with him and the hon. Member for Caithness in impressing on the Government the necessities of the present situation. I must, however, take objection to some remarks of the Lord Advocate. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said so far as the Govern-

ment' was concerned, the land question might be considered closed. There was one expression which the Lord Advocate used which I hardly think could be fairly described in the words of the hon. Member for Inverness Burghs as kindly. It was the London door-step arguement. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that the desire of the resolution of the Crofters of the Lews to stay on their holdings was very much like the resolution of the waifs and strays of the London streets to pass a night on a London door-step.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: No; I did not say that or anything at all like it. What I said was not intended to convey, and did not convey anything at all invidious. What I said was that it is a mistake to assume that everyone is entitled to expect a livelihood by staying on the spot where he was born. I thought that if you applied that to anyone born in a town, the same reason would involve the son of a householder establishing himself on the doorstep and expecting to find occupation coming to him there. I need hardly say to the hon. Gentleman that, having most valued friends of mine among the Highlands, I have not the smallest intention to compare them either with waifs or strays, or even to those like myself, who live in towns.

*MR. BUCHANAN: I beg the right hon. and learned Gentleman's pardon, but I am in the recollection of the House. In the statement he made there was nothing about the son of the occupier establishing himself on the doorstep. I am sure that the bulk of those who listened to the Lord Advocate will feel that he drew an analogy between the desire or the resolution of the crofters or the cottars in the Lews to remain in their holdings to the resolution or desire of men to pass nights on London doorsteps.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: No, Sir; I said nothing whatever of the kind.

*MR. BUCHANAN: I am glad that the right hon. and learned Gentleman now disclaims——

*THE LORD ADVOCATE: I never said anything of the kind. I repudiate the interpretation which the hon. Gentleman himself unfairly endeavours to fasten upon me.

*MR. BUCHANAN: Perhaps the hon. and learned Gentleman will listen to the conclusion of my sentence. I was expressing my gratification that he has disclaimed the interpretation which I not alone certainly put on his words. Now let me say that during the last three years the Government have been urged again and again to take further legislative action as regards the land question: to do away with some of the defects which are acknowledged to exist in the Crofters Act, and to make it a more effective method of dealing with the land question in the Highlands. In 1887 and 1888 Amendments were moved to the Address in terms somewhat similar to that we are now discussing. We have had adjournments of the House moved in the two last Sessions upon the same subjects, but nothing has been done by the Government. One Amending Act of the Crofters Act was passed, but it was merely an Administrative Amendment. The Government cannot pretend that they are unaware of the legislative improvements wanted in the Act. For instance, it is very necessary to leaseholders to receive the benefits of the Act. Then there is the question of the £30 limit, but above all there is the grievance resulting from the smallness of the holdings. A large portion of the Crofters Act of 1886 was devoted to the subject of providing extensions of holdings, but that part of the Act has been confessedly a dead letter. All that the Government seem to have done so far towards alleviating the present grave state of things in the Highlands, in so far as it relates to congestion of population, is to devise a scheme of emigration. I agree with what has been said by previous speakers —namely, that if you are to have a satisfactory scheme of emigration in the Highlands, and especially in a district like the Lews, you must accompany it by some well considered scheme of migration. I do not believe that we can hope to have a thoroughly satisfactory adjustment of the state of the Highlands until, by some process or another, land there can be better distributed, especially when it is found that large tracts of country are being put to most unprofitable purposes, such as deer forests. I beg to urge upon the Government as forcibly as I can, the great difficulty they will set up for themselves if they hug the delusion

which seems to be entertained by the Lord Advocate, that in so far as land reform is concerned, the Highlanders have got all they can get or all they deserve. I have not the slightest doubt that the Crofters' Act requires and will obtain considerable amendment and extension, and we cannot expect a permanent settlement of the difficulties until those amendments are carried out.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helens): I had not intended to take part in this discussion, but I am led to say a few words in consequence of the argument that has been advanced more than once that the emigration of crofter families to the North-West of Canada does not benefit those who are left behind, though hon. Members were forced to admit that the emigration was of benefit to those who went away. I am glad to have an acknowledgment so far, but I maintain that the benefit extends to those left behind also. It affords more room on the crofter holdings, it lessens the competition for work, and must be a direct benefit in various ways. So much is demonstrated by the report made to the Secretary for Scotland by Messrs. Fraser and M'Neill, which affords the strongest evidence that the removal of Highland families is a solid remedy for relieving the social troubles of that part of the country. Thirty families were sent out last year, and I believe it is the intention to send out forty more in the spring. All evidence combines to support such a course. We are told that the population of Lewis is increasing at the rate of 40 or 50 per cent, and the land cannot maintain the crofter families now upon it. If you can combine a system of migration with emigration I have nothing to say against it, and would by all means urge the Government to take it up. Some of us here have a cut-and-dried scheme of colonization, which I hope the House will some day have an opportunity of discussing, and we can show that in so far as the principle has been applied there is evidence to show that it is one of the best methods we can adopt, and the scheme of colonization we advocate can be shown to be by theory and experiment financially sound. The families sent out have prospered, and left more room for those remaining behind, and there is nothing to show that only those actually sent out were fit for emigration. But I merely wish now to urge on the House that this method of meeting the difficulty can be pursued with success, and to emphasize the fact that we on this side who are in favour of colonization are in no way opposed to migration. We only say that you must pay for land you acquire in the Highlands, while in Canada you can get the land for nothing, and that makes all the difference as to the possibilities of financial success. I hope the Government will proceed with the method they have adopted, and that we shall have a better opportunity of debating this subject.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I have taken very great personal interest in this matter, and have endeavoured to familiarize myself with the facts, and therefore I ask the House to listen to a few remarks, although I am not a Scotch Member, and can make no pretension to represent the crofter population. In dealing with a Debate raised in this way, we may ask, what is its object? Is it only one of those questions raised from time to time with the view of discrediting or attacking the Government of the day? ["No, no."] Well, I suppose questions are sometimes raised with that object—or is it raised with the object of benefiting those who are the subject of debate? Well, I was going to say that, in the present instance, we have a right to assume it is raised with the second and not the first of these objects. I think it would be foolish for anybody in the House to raise a debate on this Question with the view of discrediting the particular Members of the Government which now occupy the front Bench, for, as the Lord Advocate has very well said, these complaints have been made of all Governments, and certainly the Government which preceded the present Government was open to that very criticism to which the present Government is now subjected. The Government, for instance, with which I had the honour to be connected, was the Government mainly responsible for bringing forward measures intended to deal finally with this matter. It was the one which appointed the Commission, and a good deal of allusion has been made to the Report of that Commission. I remember

that those who claimed to represent the crofters in a special sense criticised the Report very sharply as being theoretical, unpractical, inadequate, and altogether unsatisfactory. Now I find, however, there is a demand put forward that the recommendations of the Commission should be carried out. But which of the recommendations? Because I should like to know whether all the objections taken to those recommendations four or five years ago have been removed by experience, and if not to which of the recommendations of the Crofters Commission Report the Government should give effect? The Government to which I belonged did not stop with the Commission. We brought in a Crofters Bill, which was at that time the expression of our views as to what was requisite, necessary, and likely to settle the question. Therefore no complaint which can be made of the present state of affairs can possibly be considered as specially affecting the present Government any more than previous Governments. At the same time I am inclined to agree with the hon. Member who raised this debate that any Government, even the present, may be all the better occasionally for a little pressure, and I should like that pressure all the better if it came from both sides of the House. The condition of the crofters when that Act was introduced was extremely unsatisfactory. I say the crofters are a class of people deserving the sympathy of this House, not only because it cannot be asserted generally that their misfortunes are due to their own fault, but also because they have borne those misfortunes with great courage, and generally in the best possible temper and spirit. On all grounds, therefore, they come before the House as a people who, being in misfortune, are deserving of the sympathy of the House; and, further, they have a right to call on the Government of the day, expressing the opinion of the House, to show that sympathy in some practical form. What were the recommendations of the Crofters Commission? Some of them have already been given effect to. The Commission recommended, for instance, that some attention should be given to the extreme hardship caused by the excessive School Board rate in certain parts of the Highlands. Now I find that some of my friends make complaint of this recommendation being attended to by the Government, and say this is a gift to the landlords. I do not think so. But in any case I think the landlords, even if it can be shown that there was a concession made to them, have reason to complain that it was not made sooner. What is the state of the case? While the education rate usually imposed on landlords and owners of property, and, above all, on tenants of land throughout the United Kingdom, averaged something like sixpence in the pound, in some of these poor districts the sum demanded brought up the rates to something like ten shillings or fifteen shillings in the pound, whereas, in London, they were only nine shillings or eleven shillings in the pound. These were perfectly ruinous rates, and I say the case is exactly similar in regard to these rates as in regard to the Postal Service rates. If the Postal Service is charged against the persons who are served, it is perfectly clear that in the distant parts of the Empire the charge would be so excessive that no post would be possible; yet we charge a penny for sending a letter to Lewis, just as we do for sending a letter from the House of Commons across the road. In the same way it is perfectly fair that the education rate should be equalized, at all events where excessive charges have become necessary owing to the nature of the district to be served. If you enforce compulsory education in these districts, the State must step in and afford some kind of assistance. In my opinion the Government are to be thanked for having dealt with this part of the recommendations of the Commission. I do not think the landlords, after all, are in anything but an unfortunate position, for, owing to the circumstances, the rates are still heavier than the average throughout the country. Then the Commission recommended that assistance should be given towards the fishing industry. I must say that here we go to the very extreme in the direction in which national assistance can be given. It amounts to this, that the State—the taxpayers of the whole country—are lending nine-tenths of the whole value of the instruments for the prosecution of a particular industry. Nine-tenths of the value of boats and gear! When you think what kind of security is offered by boats and fishing nets, everybody will agree that

to lend nine-tenths of the capital is a most liberal proposition. When I was among the crofters some two years ago I told them I did not think they could hopefully expect from the House of Commons any further grants in that direction. But there are indirect ways, more important than by loans for boats and nets, in which the Government have given some assistance already, and it is strongly urged upon them to give more, and that is in giving assistance for the construction of fishery harbours and means of communication. These stand on a different footing. As regards fishery harbours, the principle has been already conceded, and loans are already made, in connection with the Fishery Board for Scotland, for harbours. But the complaint is that these loans are made, if at all, for large harbours—harbours such as, in a certain sense, are commercial harbours—and where the rates are the security upon which the loans are raised; and that no assistance at all, practically speaking, is given for small works such as throwing out a little pier or breakwater, or something of that kind, for giving security to the small boats of fishermen, and very likely creating an industry where none now exists. Well, I am prepared to admit that though in such cases the security may be very doubtful, yet, having regard to the national interest involved, it would be a good, right, and proper policy for the Government to relax the rules, if necessary to alter the law to enable the Board to relax its rules and to give this small assistance. Very small sums would be required, a few hundreds or a few thousands, on different parts of the coast, to create purely fishing harbours. Well, then comes the much larger question of increasing the facilities for this industry by improving the means of communication; in other words, lending State assistance to the creation of main roads, or in the shape of railways or tramways—probably of light railways. Now, I can quite understand the way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be inclined to look on a proposition of this kind, or rather, I should say, the way in which he would have been inclined to look on it a year or two years ago, because the principle upon which we have proceeded in the United Kingdom has been that these are questions to be left wholly to private enterprize; and so far as England is concerned, and so far as the greater part of Scotland is concerned, I believe that principle is an absolutely sound one; that more has been done in both countries than has been done even with Government assistance in any other country in the world, or than would have been done in England and Scotland if Government had not interfered. But there are parts of the United Kingdom—Ireland and parts of Scotland—in which from the conditions of the case, from the sparseness and the poverty of the population and the nature of the industry, it is absolutely impossible to have roads or railways at all unless the Government give assistance. I have pointed out before, in every other country in the world Government assistance has been found necessary, and I do not understand why, because the greater part of England and Scotland happens to be very richly and populously occupied, those poorer parts of the United Kingdom should be left without the assistance which they would have had from the Government of any other country under similar circumstances. The Government a year ago accepted the principle in regard to Ireland that some kind of Government assistance may properly be given in these exceptional cases, and I am perfectly certain that when we come to the test no argument which could be used with regard to the west coast of Ireland could not also be used with regard the west coast of Scotland and the Highlands. If it is right to assist drainage or railway schemes in the West of Ireland, it is also right to assist similar schemes in the West of Scotland, and I confess I should be very glad if the Lord Advocate could see his way to take this into consideration. I admit it requires the greatest care, but at the same time I think the principle might be accepted, and when that is done, it will be only a question of time when it should be put into practical operation. I now come to the most important recommendation of the Commission. They pointed out what everybody admits, that the difficulty in the case of the crofter population consisted in the fact that it was so congested that the land was not able to supply subsistence without extraneous means, fish-

eries and others, which might possibly be stimulated or promoted by the Government. But, after all, the bulk of the population depends on the land, and the state of things is wholly exactly the same as in the West of Ireland. We might be discussing the position of the tenants of Donegal, the case is exactly the same. You might give them their land for nothing and they could not live upon it because of the quality of the soil and the quantity. Well, what is to be done? There are only two ways by which this difficulty can be met, the one by emigration, and the other by migration, or, in other words, by increasing the quantity of land available. When I was in Scotland, I saw crofters in almost every part of the district; they met me at cross roads, and I sometimes addressed 20 little meetings of 50 or 200 people in the course of a day, and in every case I ascertained the nature of their grievances and of their demands. They were always the same, and were often brought before me, in interesting and pathetic details, the difficulties of living, in view of the congested population; and their claim was that more land should be available for them in their own country. This was the claim universally and unanimously made. Then, naturally, I asked them, "If the land were placed at your disposal, would you be able to pay a fair rent fixed by a competent tribunal?" The answer, "Yes; we are not robbers; we do not want to steal the land." The next question was, "Are you able to stock it?" Then there was silence. It was not contested by the crofters themselves that in the vast majority of cases they would not be able to stock the land. Then I used to ask, "How are you to get over the difficulty?" The answer was, "We hope Parliament will lend money to enable us to stock it." My answer invariably was, "I am here to help you if I can, above all to learn your views, but I am not here to raise your hopes by giving my assent to what I believe an impracticable proposal." I told them on every occasion the House of Commons would be ill-advised to lend money to stock the farms; because that would be a great injustice to taxpayers in other parts of the country engaged in other enterprizes. When I had made clear my reasons why such a demand should be refused, it would sometimes be said, "If the State will not assist us to obtain stock, there are some of us—perhaps three or four, or a half a dozen out of fifty—who have the stock or could get money to buy it from friends if they had the land in their possession. At least they ought to be provided with the means of migration, and to that extent, at all events, congestion would be avoided." So I come, therefore, to what is really the practical point—though as regards the great majority it would be impossible for them to take advantage of the offer of more land—there is a certain proportion, perhaps not a very large one, which could take advantage of it, and I confess my view is in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission and the suggestion of the hon. Member for Inverness—that it would be desirable, under proper conditions, to comply with the demand for more land. Let me point out that the principle has been conceded by Parliament. The Crofters Act has a series of clauses providing that, on application being made, and proof submitted to the Commissioners that the applicant is able to stock the land, he may have more land on certain conditions. It is conceded by Parliament, and by everybody, that more land ought to be provided for them; but the conditions are such that only in a very few instances can a successful application be made. What are the conditions? One is that the land must be contiguous to the existing holdings, and the other, that it must be on the same estate as the present holding of the tenant making the application. But that is most unfair to the landlord, putting aside its practical effect upon the tenant. It so happens that there are in the Highlands and Islands landlords who have never taken any part in the clearances of the crofter population, who have recognised the difficulties of their poor tenants, have allowed them to become involved in considerable obligations, and yet, out of a feeling of sympathy, have allowed the crofters to remain on the land where their families had been for generations. Therefore, it is upon the landlords who had a larger proportion of crofters than others that this burden of providing additional portions of land would fall, whereas the landlord who, on a neighbouring estate, had, by common consent, behaved with

great stringency, would escape the burden. This condition is not only a hardship upon the good landlord, but it practically renders the operation of the Act impossible, because there is no suitable land contiguous and on the same estate. Now why should not the operation of the Act be extended? What is there to prevent the Land Commission from being empowered to say to a crofter township, "Here is land sufficient to accommodate 10 out of 20 crofters. We are ready to make it available"? The crowded land would thus be relieved by the transfer of crofters to another estate, and if on an island perhaps to the mainland. It seems to me that the operation of the Act is most disadvantageously limited by this condition, which makes it necessary that the land offered be contiguous to the existing holding. There are other conditions, but I have said enough to show that the principle accepted as desirable has been frustrated in its application by the conditions. I should like to hear from the Government that they are willing to take this into consideration; and, if they find, as they must find—that this is the case, that they will extend their proposal, and, at all events, make their emigration clauses a reality instead of a sham, as they are at present. Having said that, I say further, that I went into this question with a prejudice against emigration, sympathizing strongly with the desire of the people to remain in their own country, amid their old associations; but having studied the question, I have come to the conclusion that real relief is impossible without a large scheme of emigration. At the same time, I say that such schemes would be assisted by one of migration. Those who form the great majority, and who cannot migrate, would emigrate. Still, I admit that the Government would be very wrong to proceed otherwise than tentatively with a scheme of emigration. Previous schemes of emigration have failed, and the word is a reproach in the Highlands. Many landlords in the past emigrated their tenants, and, though in many cases animated with the best feelings, they sent them abroad under such circumstances as to cause many of the emigrants to undergo great sufferings and privations in their new homes. The news of these failures has come back, and ever since emigration has been unfavourably viewed. The Government, therefore, would be wrong to encourage emigration without following the emigrants up, and seeing that experiments of this kind are made under circumstances that render it almost certain that they will be successful. But I think it is a good thing. They have commenced the experiment, they are trying it, and I hope they will carry it a great deal further. It has been said by one hon. Member that he does not see why the taxpayers of the country should be involved in a scheme of this kind. Well, I do not agree with him. I do not believe that a wise scheme of emigration carefully carried out will really involve the taxpayer in any very serious loss. I believe that there will be less loss in connection with a well devised scheme of this sort than in connection with any other scheme in which the aid of the State is at the present time required. But at the same time I will say that this is one of those cases where a deserving part of the population is brought to a condition of misery through no fault of their own, and the rest of the population must come to their aid. I regard this question as very serious. I know the pressure there is to induce the Government to leave things alone, and do nothing until this becomes a burning question; but I have seen enough to convince me that there is a sore which if not cured, will spread. Where there is, as in the Highlands, a basis of wrong, we cannot tell how far it will spread. Let us bear in mind the history of Ireland. Agitation in Ireland has sprung out of a real grievance—a real agrarian grievance. In the Highlands and Islands of Scotland there is a real agrarian grievance—misery almost amounting to starvation on the part of a most deserving population—and unless some remedy is found I will predict serious trouble for the Government and this House.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I think it cannot be denied that the debate has been most interesting on this important question. It has, perhaps, been prolonged more than we expected, but the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for

West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) has fully justified that prolongation. I admit that this is a very serious question, but I cannot admit that there is a basis of wrong underlying it. The state of things is the result of modern civilization—the result of the progress which has been made during the past few years in bringing the United Kingdom into close communication with the whole world, and the resources of the Highlands being thus brought into competition with those of other parts of the world. Scotland with a less productive soil and a less genial climate has to compete against lands which can be made productive at much less cost of labour and capital. There is a demand that there should be land for the unfortunate cottars and crofters in Scotland. We sympathize with the demand most thoroughly and most heartily. We sympathize with the desire the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has given expression to—the desire of the cottars to continue to live on the land where their forefathers have lived before them. But the forces of Nature have to be faced, and we must all accommodate ourselves to the conditions of the time. I am quite willing to express my sympathy for the distress and my desire to alleviate that distress, but I think the Government would be to blame if we had referred to such sympathy with the distress without also indicating the methods by which we proposed to alleviate it. Our responsibility would have been great, for it would have raised expectations which it would not have been possible for us in the House of Commons to realise. The Amendment now before the House is practically a Vote of Censure on Her Majesty's Government for not having proposed legislation in the Queen's Speech. It must be borne in mind, however, that the Crofter Commission is absolutely independent of Her Majesty's Government. We have no power nor right, nor is it a part of our duty, to dictate to them how they should discharge the duties imposed upon them by the Act of 1886, and it should be remembered that the Commissioners are not our appointees, but were appointed by the Government that preceded us. If they have failed to make certain recommendations for the benefit of the crofters, it must be either because an application has not been made to them by the crofters for the extension of their holdings, or else because the Commissioners have felt that a more pressing duty for them to discharge was that of revising rents and making arrangements in regard to arrears. But however that may be, we have had no part whatever in the administration of the Crofters Act. That duty has rested upon the Commissioners, who have received all the assistance which the Government could give them in the discharge of their duties. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has spoken of migration and of emigration. I have often heard migration proposed in this House, though I have never seen in print any proposal which has taken a practical shape with regard to migration within the United Kingdom. For my own part I am in such a complete accord with the principle which is recognized in migration—namely, the recognition of those home-loving sentiments which belong to the people of this country and of Scotland—that, if a practical scheme were put before me which was not demoralizing in itself, I should give it my cordial approval. No scheme has yet been submitted to Parliament, or to persons outside Parliament, that would gain acceptance by a considerable number of persons who really understand the question. If any one were to put before the House and the country a scheme by which migration could be carried out without

confiscation, I am convinced that Parliament would consider the plan with every desire to give effect to it, and to do justice to all concerned. There are many exceedingly well-disposed persons in this country as well as in Scotland who would gladly aid in carrying out a plan presented in a practical form. Land, I am sorry to say, can be had in almost any quantity in Scotland as well as in England, and with some of this the experiment could be tried if hon. Gentlemen who believe in the principles they advance would put the proposal into practical shape. I do not suppose that any one desires that crofters should pay less than the real reasonable value of the land; and if that is so, I am sure there are plenty of liberal people in the country who would be ready to assist in making this experiment. Allusions have been made by the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clarke) as to the conditions under which Votes have been supplied by the Government, and as to the extent to which the Treasury has gone. The Government are bound, I think, not to act upon a mere sentimental or generous view of its responsibilities, but they are bound to rely upon those who are responsible for the return of the money advanced. I cannot say whether the distribution of the Vote to which the hon. Member referred was right or wrong, but we must trust to the Fishery Board to administer it fairly and properly, as I believe they have done. I agree that we ought to endeavour to do everything in our power to improve communications and to afford facilities for the fishing industries. But there is one condition which I should wish to make. We ought not to make loans as mere shams. If we make a loan it should be made to some authority which is capable of returning, and certain to return, the money at some time or other. The Government are fully sensible of the circumstances. We know that, although the population is comparatively a small one, it is one which deserves the utmost sympathy and consideration on the part of the Government. Whether we have failed or succeeded in the colonization which we have attempted, and which is going forward again in the spring, must remain to be seen; but I think we should be extremely to blame if we ventured on a large scheme of this kind without trying whether the proposals are likely to be successful or not. I regret that it should become necessary for any of us to leave these shores. There is hardly a Member in this House, hardly a Scotchman in the House, who has not felt it necessary to leave his home, and it is not for us to advise any man to remain for ever on the hearthstone on which he was bred, or to trust for his livelihood solely to the place in which he was born. We have endeavoured to do what we can for these crofters to meet the distress to which they have been subject, but we think it better to proceed with care and consideration in the matter rather than to attempt great and heroic steps which might tend to their misfortune rather than to their advantage.

Question put,

"That the words 'Humbly to express to Your Majesty our regret that, whilst reference is made in Your Most Gracious Speech to our early attention being asked to measures for developing the material resources of Ireland, no reference is made to the distress which prevails in many parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, nor to any measures for removing or alleviating said distress, or of developing the material resources of said Highlands and Islands' be there inserted."

The House divided: — Ayes 96; Noes 160: Majority 64. — (Division List No. 2).

Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

It being after midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

House adjourned at ten minutes after twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 9.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 13.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 5th March, 1889.

The Lord Carew, Took the Oath.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

A Bill to alter and amend the Law as to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister—Was presented by the Duke of Saint Albans; read 1ª. (No. 16.)

PRIVATE BILLS.

All Petitions relating to Standing Orders which shall be presented during the present Session referred to the Standing Orders Committee unless otherwise ordered.

Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Friday the 21st day of June next:

That no Bill originating in this House authorizing any inclosure of lands under Special Report of the Land Commissioners for England, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a first time after Friday the 10th day of May next;

That no Bill originating in this House confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a first time after Friday the 10th day of May next;

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons authorizing any inclosure of lands under Special Report of the Land Commissioners for England, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a second time after Friday the 28th day of June next;

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order Certificate shall be read a second time after Friday the 28th day of June next:

That when a Bill shall have passed this House with Amendments, these Provisional Orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended;

That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill after Thursday the 9th day of May next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice, nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice after Friday the 17th day of May next;

That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after Friday the 17th day of May next;

Ordered, That the said orders be printed and published, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. (No. 17.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 5th March, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

THE NORTHERN ROMAN WALL.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, South) (for Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, London University): I wish to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether it is true that the North British Railway Company have obtained powers enabling them to destroy some of the small remaining portion of the North Roman Wall or vallum; and whether any steps are being taken to place it under the protection of the Ancient Monuments Act?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): I am informed that the North British Railway Company have acquired some ground in the neighbourhood of

Falkirk, on which is situated a portion of the Roman wall, and have run a branch line through a part of the wall, at a spot, however, where the remains are not so well defined as they are more to the east. I am told that the railway company have at present no intention of interfering further with the wall, and they can if they like place it under the protection of the Ancient Monuments Act, but I have not any power to compel that to be done.

CITY OF EDINBURGH POLICE.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he has received a petition from George Walker touching his dismissal from the City of Edinburgh Police; if it is a fact that Walker has been permanently injured on duty; and, what was the fault alleged against him?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): The Secretary for Scotland last November received a petition from George Walker on this subject. It appears that in March, 1886, Walker, while on duty, received permanent injury to his knee-cap. He was, however, retained in the Edinburgh Police Force, and was on duty at the Industrial Museum in May, 1888. In that month he was reprimanded for being about an hour late in his attendance, and on a recurrence of the offence he was dismissed. The matter was fully considered by the Magistrates of Edinburgh. I am not aware that there is any reflection on the general character of the policeman; in fact, a gratuity was voted to him.

THE BALLOT ACT.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if complaint has been made to him anent an alleged violation of the Ballot Act in connection with the election of a checkweigher at Knockterra Pit, near Cumnock, where the morning after said election sixteen of the workmen were dismissed, and the remainder taken aside one by one and asked by two managers if they had voted for the checkweigher; and what action he purposes taking in connection therewith?

MR. ROBERTSON: Complaint was made to me on this subject by Mr. Keir Hardie, and I have had it inquired into. It is clear that no punishable offence is constituted by the proceedings alleged to have taken place. Although the Mines Act contemplates that the election of a checkweigher may be by Ballot, the Ballot Act does not apply to such elections. In the present instance, indeed, the election was not in any proper sense a Ballot election, as the voting papers were openly delivered and openly returned. The case, therefore, is not one in which I can take any action.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Has the Lord Advocate received his information from the employers or the workmen?

MR. ROBERTSON: I have not made inquiry from either the one or the other.

POLICE ACTING AS GAMEKEEPERS.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the police in Renfrewshire, and especially the police at Pollokshaws, are instructed by their superiors, or allowed by their superiors, to act as gamekeepers on the estate of Sir John Stirling Maxwell, baronet, of Pollok, and to apprehend and take the names of persons trespassing in pursuit of game, and to examine witnesses and prepare statements for Sir John's solicitors, for the purpose of prosecuting persons who trespass in pursuit of game on Sir John's estates; and, if so, under what Act of Parliament or other authority the above course is allowed?

MR. ROBERTSON: This matter was referred to me, and, on making inquiries, I am informed by the Chief Constable that the Renfrewshire Constabulary are not allowed to act as gamekeepers in any part of the county, nor are they instructed or allowed to prepare statements for solicitors. If the hon. Member, in putting this Question, has has any special case in view, I shall be glad, on his furnishing me with particulars, to make further inquiries regarding it.

SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS ON RAILWAYS.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade when he proposes to bring in a Bill to deal with the several points of safety arrangements on Railways, and Returns of overtime work, on which he

undertook on the 8th of May last to legislate?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): In the debate on the date referred to by the hon. Member, I said that I would endeavour at the earliest opportunity I could find to ask Parliament to deal with questions of public safety in the working of Railways. But I was not able then to fix any time for doing so—other subjects must have precedence of this. On some points, especially in the matter of couplings, further information is necessary before I could undertake to lay a Bill on the Table of the House. As regards overtime, the Returns called for are in an advanced state of preparation, and I hope will be shortly presented. Until they have been considered, I do not think it is desirable to decide what is to be done as to future Returns, which, it is to be observed, we can call for without further legislation.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to give notice that I will draw attention to this subject on the Vote for the Board of Trade.

RAILWAY STATISTICS.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade have as yet made any orders on Railway Companies, under section 32 of "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," requiring them to furnish additional statistics in their Returns to the Board of Trade; and, if so, on what subjects such statistics have been ordered?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Railway Companies have been very much occupied in regard to the schedules of classification and maximum rates to be prepared under the Act of last Session, and the Board of Trade have not at present called for any additional Returns under that Act. I undertook, however, in reply to a Question from the hon. Member in December last, to deal with Returns as to couplings early this year. The matter has been under my attention, and I shall be glad to confer with the hon. Member as to the most desirable form to be adopted.

FAIR RENTS IN TYRONE.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, South) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland "whether applications to have fair rents fixed in the division of South Tyrone have been listed since 1887 without being heard; and, if he can say when the Commission will sit at Dungannon and Clogher for the purpose of hearing such cases?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): The Land Commissioners inform me that the cases in the Unions of Dungannon and Clogher received up to the 26th and 10th of October, 1887, respectively, have been listed for hearing. A list has just been issued for the Unions of Omagh, Irvinestown, and Enniskillen. The Commissioners are not at present in a position to say what Union will be taken up when that list is finished.

THE ESTATE OF THE LORD LIEUTENANT.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, South) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the eviction of the tenant Barr on the estate of the Lord Lieutenant, near Newtownards, whether he is aware that the eviction was carried out under the superintendence of his agent, Mr. Brownlow, J.P., at seven o'clock at night; whether Barr (nursing an infant) and five children were carried out and left in the snow; whether his sick wife was carried out and left lying on some straw in the snow, and all were afterwards placed in the workhouse cart and removed to the workhouse at Newtownards; whether, on the following day, Mr. Brownlow, J.P., procured some dynamite from a road contractor, and having unroofed Barr's house, then destroyed the walls with dynamite; whether this house had been built by the tenant, and without any contribution from the landlord; whether the tenant had offered to the agent £34 on the day on which the agent had agreed to accept £10 in satisfaction of all rent due, and also promised to pay the balance in a few days; whether a few days subsequently Barr offered the full amount agreed upon, but the agent refused to accept same unless Barr would sell the farm and give up his home;

whether the rent due was the old rent and not the judicial rent; and, whether, considering the hardships of this case, and of many similar cases in Ireland, he will not advise the Government to bring in a Bill to deal with arrears of rent?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the agent with the sheriff's officers arrived at Barr's house at 12, noon, and were about to proceed with the eviction whereupon Barr's wife feigned illness. The agent considered it advisable to have the opinion of a doctor before proceeding with the eviction. This occasioned a delay of some two hours and a half. The doctor having pronounced the woman to have nothing wrong with her the eviction was then proceeded with, the agent receiving final possession at seven o'clock in the evening. It is the case that the man Barr, who is in good health, and is now earning £1 a week in Belfast had to be carried out, as he refused to leave, and likewise his wife, but she was not sick as is alleged. This family was not removed to the workhouse in the workhouse cart. A covered conveyance was provided by the agent, but the family would not use it. On the following day the agent did render the house uninhabitable. The house had not been built by Barr, but was on the farm when he came into possession ten years ago, and had been allowed by him to fall into complete decay. The rent due was the old rent. I have already replied to the remaining portion of the Question, but as the hon. Member seems to desire it, I have no objection to repeat that reply, viz.:—The circumstances under which Mr. Brownlow acted were, I am informed, of the following character. Nearly five years ago (April, 1884) proceedings were taken for two years' rent, but owing to illness in the family the proceedings were stopped, and Lord Londonderry gave the tenant a donation of £5. Two years afterwards an ejectment was taken out for three years' rent, but withdrawn on a promise from the tenant to sell his farm. A year afterwards a second ejectment was issued for four years' rent, but further proceedings were delayed on account of repeated promises by the tenant to sell. The agent then offered to take £40 in full discharge of the arrears of £79 9s. 0d. due, on the express condition that the tenant was to sell the farm. The tenant subsequently offered the £40, but would not fulfil the condition as to sale. A warrant for possession was obtained on 13th December, 1888, but the agent consented to stay execution for a month, but as a matter of fact waited until the warrant was about to expire. It is evident that no Arrears Bill would meet a case of this kind.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask whether the conveyance to which the right hon. Gentleman refers was not the cart which was used for the conveyance of fever and small-pox patients; whether the house the Lord Lieutenant blew up with dynamite was not built by the tenants; and whether when Barr offered the full amount the condition of its acceptance was not that the man should leave the farm?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I know nothing about the cart beyond what I have stated, and I very much doubt whether Barr was entitled to the house. As to the remaining question, I have no knowledge of the circumstances mentioned.

MR. M'CARTAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the rent due was the old rent and not the fair rent?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: So far as I understand it the rent was the old rent.

LETTERS TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

MR. ATKINSON (Boston) asked the Postmaster General by whose authority letters to Members of the House redirected to addresses out of the London postal district are charged again, while those addressed to other places are delivered free; and whether he will cause such unequal treatment of Members of Parliament to cease?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): Redirected letters for Members of Parliament are not differently treated from those for other persons, but are liable on re-direction to additional charge, unless both the original and the second address are within the delivery of the same post office. The London Postal District is considered as being within the delivery of the same post office, and letters redirected from one part of London to another are, therefore, exempt from charge, while letters re-directed from

any part of London to the provinces are liable.

THE CASE OF LUK AYDEN.

DR. COMMINS (Roscommon, S.) asked the Chief Secretary whether Luke Hayden, of Castlerea, in the county Roscommon, was taken from his bed under a warrant for an offence under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, at the hour of 11.30 of the night of the 3rd instant; whether the door of his house was broken in by the police for the purpose of effecting his arrest; whether he was not hurried off after such arrest by a night train to Castlebar, in another county; whether the warrant for such arrest was directed to issue three weeks before by the magistrates who had adjudicated upon his case; whether he was openly and publicly to be found in Castlerea during the three weeks intervening between the arrest and the adjudication of the Court by virtue of which he was arrested; and, whether he would give directions to the police to abstain from such a manner of executing warrants?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary authorities report that the man mentioned was not arrested for an offence under the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, but under 34 Edward III. cap. I. The warrant was executed by the Police on the day on which it was received by them. No unnecessary hardship appears to have been inflicted on the man by the Police in their manner of effecting his arrest and conveying him to prison.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Does not the right hon. Gentleman remember that in a debate last Session it was pointed out that the Statute of Edward III. was repealed by the Statute of George III.?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no recollection of that. I have a recollection of the debate the hon. Gentleman alludes to, and of a conversation between the hon. Member and the Home Secretary as to the political aspects of the case; but I understand that the Act of Edward III. was not repealed by the Statute of George III.

MR. SEXTON: We find that a number of persons in respectable positions in life are arrested by having their houses broken into at night, and themselves taken out of bed. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will give instructions to the police to arrest persons charged with these offences at a time when it is not necessary to take them out of bed?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am most anxious that these arrests should be effected at the most convenient time; but the hon. Gentleman is aware that every effort is being made in Ireland to prevent the carrying out of the law.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the second paragraph of the Question.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the police went to the house, knocked, waited a reasonable time, and, admittance being refused, used such force as was necessary to open the door.

CAVALRY SWORDS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the War Office accepted the Report of the Board of Officers assembled at Dublin in December last to report upon the swords of the 5th Dragoon Guards—namely, that "all the swords in charge of the 5th Dragoon Guards are undoubtedly inferior in quality and quite unfit for military service;" whether both the Major General commanding the Dublin District and the Inspector General of Cavalry in Ireland had concurred in that Report; whether both Lord Wolseley and the Chief Inspector of Small Arms condemned the pattern itself as being too light, and still another "new pattern" of cavalry sword is to be introduced; whether the pattern so condemned was first adopted so recently as 1885, and the defective swords were issued to the 5th Dragoon Guards so recently as last year; whether the same Special Committee which recommended that defective pattern also recommended the tests which are now officially stated to have further weakened it; what guarantee yet exists that the new pattern or the new tests are more to be depended upon than the recent pattern and tests which they replaced, especially as according to those new and weaker tests the Inspector reports that only about 14 per cent are defective of the very swords which the Board of officers report as "all" quite unfit for military service; does the appointment of a Committee relieve of his responsibility the military official definitely charged with, and paid for, the duty of

selecting proper swords for British troops; and what is the official title of the officer so responsible, and is he the same official who, in addition to the Adjutant General, signed the Report recently presented to Parliament?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): My military advisers do not accept the Report of the Board of Officers. My answer to the second, third, fourth, and fifth Questions is "Yes." In answer to the sixth Question, the new pattern and the new tests have not yet been decided upon. In answer to the seventh and eighth Questions, the Committee must be regarded as responsible for the pattern and the tests to be applied. But, their recommendation having been approved, the Director of Artillery is responsible that the pattern is adhered to, and that no sword is passed into the service which has failed to pass the tests.

In further answer to Mr. HANBURY,

MR. E. STANHOPE said: The contract price of cavalry swords of the 1885 pattern was with Solingen (which made 20,000 swords) 20s., and with Birmingham (where 7,500 were made) 24s. The price of the swords of cavalry officers varies, I am informed, from £2 12s. 6d. to £7. My answer to the fourth Question is in the affirmative.

THE ALLOTMENTS ACT, 1887.

MR COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether, as the period has expired during which sanitary authorities can make application for Provisional Orders to acquire land compulsorily for allotments under "The Allotments Act, 1887," he can state how many of such applications have been made, and the names of the sanitary authorities making them?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have received two such applications, one from the Wayland Rural Sanitary Authority, and the other from the Shipston-on-Stour Rural Sanitary Authority.

TELEGRAPHIC MONEY ORDERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General if there is likely to be much further delay in introducing into this country the telegraphic money order system which has been adopted on the Continent and in the Australian Colonies?

MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I am glad to be able to state that I hope very shortly to announce to the House the date on and from which telegraphic money orders will be introduced by way of experiment in this country.

POSTAGE TO INDIA OF ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS FROM FRANCE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General whether the practice of sending from England newspapers for India and China to be posted in France is legal; and on what figures the calculation that the Revenue does not suffer from the practice is based?

MR. RAIKES: As the Post Office has no monopoly in the conveyance of newspapers, the practice alluded to by the hon. Member is perfectly legal. To show the hon. Member how it is that the British Revenue does not suffer by the practice, I may state that, for a 4-oz. newspaper posted here for India, the postage prepaid by the sender is 1½d., out of which ½d. goes to France and Italy for the special transit across those countries, and ½d. is credited to India towards the cost of the Inland Service there, so that only ½d. remains towards the expense of collection, sorting, stamping, and conveyance to Dover, not to mention the sea conveyance from Brindisi to Bombay. If the same newspaper were posted in France, it would cost us absolutely nothing, while we should receive from France for the sea conveyance ¾d.

THE MILITIA.

VISCOUNT BARING (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade) asked the Secretary of State for War whether it is true that the Militia is at present about 22,000 men under its establishment; and whether any steps are being taken to complete the force to its proper strength?

MR. E. STANHOPE: It is true that by the latest Returns the Militia was more than 20,000 men below its establishment. The reward for a Militia recruit has, therefore, been raised from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, and I am glad to say the results

have so far been satisfactory. The effective strength of the Militia was raised by 1,687 men in January, and the increase continued during February.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is a fact that Mr. Robert Anderson, of Scotland Yard, in January last, at his private residence in Linden Gardens, handed to a *Times* witness calling himself Le Caron (who described himself as a military spy, and whose real name was Beach), a number of confidential documents, forming part of a correspondence which had come into Mr. Anderson's possession in his official capacity; whether it is a fact that Mr. Anderson at the same time, voluntarily and unasked, gave Le Caron a letter of introduction to Houston, who was assisting the Solicitor to the *Times* in obtaining evidence, and said that Houston was a gentleman upon whom Le Caron could rely implicitly, and that Houston had been selected as representing the interests of the prosecution; whether it is a fact that Mr. Anderson at the time he handed the documents to Le Caron said that he had chosen or culled from the correspondence what he thought Le Caron would need in the case; whether it is a fact that the documents were allowed to remain for a considerable time in the custody of Houston at his rooms in Cork Street; whether he was aware that Le Caron swore before the Special Commission to the truth of the facts named in this Question, and, further, that he had never heard Houston's name until it was mentioned to him by Mr. Anderson, and that, in giving the introduction to Houston, he understood Mr. Anderson to mean that Houston was a gentleman whom the *Times* could trust; whether he has ascertained from Mr. Anderson if Le Caron's evidence is in these respects true; and, if true, what action he will take in the matter; and whether, if Mr. Anderson stated that the evidence was false, the Government will prosecute Le Caron for perjury?

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe), had also given notice—

"To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, as he has admitted that the handing over by Mr. Robert Anderson of confidential papers in his possession in his official capacity to a man calling himself Le Caron (a witness for the *Times* newspaper), to be taken away and used by Le Caron and Houston, was done without the knowledge or authority of the Secretary of State and not by order of the Special Commission, he proposes to take any action with respect to this conduct of a person holding such a position as that of Assistant Commissioner of Police."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): I will answer the Question of the hon. Member for Rugby and that of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division (Mr. John Ellis) on the same subject at the same time. I have already, in an answer to the right hon. Member for Derby, stated that Mr. Anderson will be called as a witness before the Special Commission, and he can then be cross-examined as to his action in regard to Le Caron and as to the character of the documents he handed to Le Caron. I must decline to anticipate Mr. Anderson's evidence by answers in this House, or to express any opinion as to the truth of Le Caron's evidence while the Commission is still sitting. Nor can I, with respect to Mr. Anderson, add anything to what I stated in the House on March 1.

MR. COBB: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has ascertained from Mr. Anderson whether Le Caron's evidence is true or false?

MR. MATTHEWS: That is exactly the Question which I must decline to answer.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: My Question does not relate to anything that Le Caron said. I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman, having admitted in the House that these things were done, does not think it necessary to have a special investigation into the matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: I shall wait the result of the examination of Mr. Anderson before the Special Commission before I take any action.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman guarantee that Mr. Anderson will be examined before the Commission?

No answer was given to this Question.

MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is true that Mr. Andrews, the Governor of Downpatrick Prison, attempted to influence P. W. Nally to give evidence in support

of the charges and allegations of the *Times;* whether an agent of the *Times* visited Nally in Millbank Prison without Nally's invitation and contrary to his wishes; whether the agent of the *Times* represented himself to the prison authorities as the friend of Nally; and, if not, then on what ground he was admitted; whether the agent of the *Times* produced a letter, purporting to be written by John W. Nally, the prisoner's brother, recommending the prisoner to accede to the wishes of the agent of the *Times;* and whether the interview took place in the presence and in the hearing of a warder?

MR. MATTHEWS: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to put the first paragraph of this Question to the representative of the Irish Government, whom it concerns? As to the last paragraph, I have to say that Nally was visited in Millbank by Mr. Thompson as the representative of Mr. Soames, who made the application for leave to visit. The visit was not in consequence of any invitation by Nally, who expressed no wish one way or another. Mr. Thompson did not represent himself as a friend of Nally's. He was admitted as a representative of Mr. Soames. No letter was produced of the kind specified, or of any kind. The interview took place in the view but not in the hearing of the warder.

MR. J. MORLEY: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the alleged letter of Nally's brother was produced to the prisoner with a view of inducing him to give certain evidence?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have no information on that point.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I should like to know whether it is the practice, under the rule allowing a prisoner to have visitors at stated times, to send in persons under the name of visitors who are the agents of solicitors without a request from the prisoner?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that it is the practice of the Prison Commissioners to allow solicitors who desire to see prisoners on business to pay a visit independently of the visits paid under the ordinary prison rules.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean the solicitor to the prisoner or a hostile solicitor?

MR. MATTHEWS: A solicitor who represents that he desires to see the prisoner on business.

MR. J. MORLEY: Are we to understand that that rule applies where the prisoner himself expresses an objection to receiving visitors, as in this case?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that in this case the prisoner did not express objection to receive the visit.

MR. J. MORLEY: May I ask whether the prisoner did not object to a repetition of the visit?

MR. MATTHEWS: I must ask for notice of that Question. My information is that Nally expressed no wish either one way or the other.

MR. J. MORLEY: I will now put to the Chief Secretary the first paragraph of the Question.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was on my way to the House when my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary asked me to answer it. I am making inquiry, and I shall be glad to answer when I can.

MR. SEXTON: I desire to ascertain whether Nally had any opportunity of expressing a wish one way or the other? Was he informed of the visit in advance?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have given the House all the information in my possession. If further information is desired, I will make inquiry.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): Since this agent of the *Times* was permitted to visit Nally, may I ask why a friend of Nally's was refused permission to visit him, on the ground that he (Nally) had forfeited his right to visits on account of misconduct, though Nally assured me that he had never been once reported during the whole time of his incarceration?

MR. MATTHEWS: Perhaps the hon. Member will put that Question on the Paper.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, North): Are we to understand that any solicitor who states that he has got business with a prisoner will be admitted at once by the Governor to see him?

MR. MATTHEWS: The ordinary practice of the Prison Commissioners is to admit a solicitor, or his representative, who says he has business with a prisoner, to see him.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think we should understand this clearly. Is it

sufficient for any solicitor to present himself at any prison, and state that he desires to see a prisoner on business, to entitle him to admission?

MR. MATTHEWS: He must have first asked for and obtained the permission of the Prison Commissioners.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is true that Mr. H. W. Lees informed Mr. Munro twice by letter of the intention to hold a meeting on Sunday near Cleopatra's Needle on the Embankment, and that Mr. Munro gave no reply, and did not intimate to Mr. Lees his intention to prevent such meeting; whether such meeting was in fact forcibly prevented; and, if so, on what ground and upon whose authority; whether it is true that Mr. Hyndman arranged with a Police Superintendent that the meeting should instead be held near the Achilles Statue in Hyde Park; and, whether such meeting was forcibly suppressed and several assaults committed by the police; and, if so, what is the justification (if any) of such proceedings?

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I wish also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he has now any information to give the House as to the dispersal of the meeting on the Embankment on Sunday?

MR. MATTHEWS: I will answer both Questions at the same time. The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The letters conveyed a notice that certain persons intended to hold a meeting in a public thoroughfare. The Commissioner did not consider it his duty to enter into any correspondence on the subject. The meeting was not forcibly prevented, as the persons assembled did not persist in holding the meeting after they were warned, but proceeded to Hyde Park. The Commissioner is not aware that any arrangement was entered into between Mr. Hyndman and any police superintendent as to meeting near the Achilles statue. A meeting was held at the statue and was not suppressed by the police. The meeting after a time showed a tendency to become disorderly, some stones were thrown at the police, and there was a danger of the crowd getting on to and injuring the statue, the chain round which was broken. Mr. Burns advised the crowd to meet at the Reformers' Tree, and the advice was followed. The Commissioner denies that assaults were committed by the police, who acted throughout with forbearance.

SIR C. RUSSELL: I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman's attention has been called to the fact that in some of the public papers the numbers of the constables who committed the assaults have been given; and whether he has caused inquiry to be made into those facts?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; I have caused inquiries to be made, and I have given the hon. Gentleman the answer.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: Are the public to understand that they are not to be permitted to meet at Cleopatra's Needle, and whether this neighbourhood is to be looked upon as a prohibited area like Trafalgar Square?

MR. MATTHEWS: The public must understand that meetings in a public thoroughfare which cause an obstruction in that thoroughfare will not be permitted.

MR. GRAHAM: Then I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware of the object of this particular meeting; that it had no political bias whatever, but was called simply to consider the condition of the starving poor in London?

MR. MATTHEWS: The object of the meeting can have no bearing whatever on the question, which is, whether the meeting obstructs the thoroughfare or not.

POST OFFICE VEHICLES.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Penryn and Falmouth): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether any steps have been taken to furnish vehicles used for the service of the General Post Office in London with lamps to be lighted when required; and if he will explain why a provision so necessary for the protection of the inhabitants of London has not been hitherto enforced?

MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member, I beg to say that I have arranged that all the vehicles employed in the Mail Cart Service in London shall carry lamps after dark.

This arrangement is being actively carried out by the contractors, and the greater portion of the vehicles—if not all—have now been fitted. Previous contracts for the Service did not provide for lighting the vehicles, but in the contracts which I have lately entered into I reserved the power which I have now exercised of calling on the contractors to provide lamps.

DETECTIVES IN THE LOBBY.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is true, as stated in the *Star* newspaper on Saturday, that a large number of detectives were stationed in the Outer Lobby of this House on Friday night; if so, by whose authority they were placed there and with what object?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir. I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that this statement is untrue.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: Does the right hon. Gentleman assert that there were no detectives in the Lobby on Friday night?

MR. MATTHEWS: I submitted the hon. Member's Question — namely, whether a certain statement was true —to the Commissioner of Police, and the answer is that it is untrue.

WALES AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg, Sir, to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Welsh version of the Local Government Act, 1888, will be published; also whether his attention has been directed to the published opinion of the Attorney General that the proceedings of the Welsh County Councils must be carried on and recorded in the English language; whether he is aware that the section of the Statute on which this opinion is based enacts that no person or persons that use the Welsh language shall have or enjoy any manner of office or fees within Wales upon pain of forfeiting the same offices or fees unless he or they exercise the English language; and whether he intends to enforce the provisions of this Statute?

*MR. RITCHIE: The whole of the translation of the Local Government Act into Welsh has been completed; but there has been some difficulty in the printing. I am unable to say precisely when the translation will be issued, but I will press it on as rapidly as possible. My attention has not been drawn to an opinion of the Attorney General to the effect that the proceedings of the Welsh County Councils must be carried on and recorded in English. But I am aware that there is a section in the 27th Henry VIII., cap. 26, which contains a provision to the effect that no person or persons that use the Welsh language should have or enjoy any manner of office or fees within Wales upon pain of forfeiting the same offices or fees, unless he or they exercised the English language. I am not at present aware of any case in which it would be necessary for me to exercise any power I may possess in this matter. If any case is brought under my notice, I must, of course, consider all the circumstances of it.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS: Will the Attorney General state whether in his opinion offices under the Local Government Act would be forfeited?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No difficulty has arisen in Wales on similar matters, but at the same time no legal question has been raised.

MR. J. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): In view of the forthcoming Local Government Bill for Scotland, will the right hon. Gentleman arrange that it shall be translated into Gaelic?

The Question was not answered.

MARGARINE.

MR. BOND (Dorset, E.): I have to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a memorial has been forwarded to him from the Court of Quarter Sessions of Dorsetshire, representing that the Margarine Act is being evaded; and what course Her Majesty's Government intend to take in the matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: I understand that a memorial has been received, but no decision has yet been come to with regard to the matter.

CAPTAIN WISSMANN.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the

Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to a telegram, through Reuter's Agency, dated Alexandria, 25th February, which states that "Captain Wissmann has arrived here on his way to Zanzibar. He proceeds to-night to Cairo, where he will probably recruit a force of some hundred blacks;" and whether the consent of the Egyptian Government has been obtained for the enlistment of its subjects?

SIR J. FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Government are aware of the project of Captain Wissmann, of the German Army. Sir Evelyn Baring has reported his arrival at Cairo, and has stated that his proceedings have not received any official sanction; but that the Egyptian Government do not propose to put any obstacles in the way of his endeavouring to obtain by purely voluntary enlistment a few blacks for service in a police force. He adds that there are a good many blacks at Cairo, emigrants from the Soudan, and others, who are out of work, and who will be benefited if employment can be obtained for them.

CAPE COLONY PRISONS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any steps whatever have been taken by the Colonial Authorities since August last to remedy the wretched state shown by the Report on the Penal Establishments in Cape Colony to then exist in the Colonial prisons; whether the evils reported on have been known to the Government for more than two years; whether any representations have been made to the Colonial Authorities by the Secretary of State; and, if he will lay upon the Table the Report on this subject made by the Committee on Convicts and Gaols appointed by the Cape Town Parliament?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): I informed the House on the 26th ult. that the Cape Government had taken immediate steps by legislation to remedy the condition of the Colonial Prisons. The Secretary of State is not aware how long the evils reported upon have been known to the Colonial Government; they were not known to Her Majesty's Government until the Report disclosed them. No representations by the Colonial Authorities have been made to the Secretary of State. It is not the duty of the Secretary of State to supervize the internal administration of a colony under responsible government. It would not be right to publish the Report here without a statement of what has been in pursuance of it.

MR. BRADLAUGH: On the Colonial Vote I will call attention to the fact that no steps whatever have been taken to remedy the evils complained of.

THE SALVATION ARMY.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, when during the last five years officers and members of the Salvation Army have been sentenced in England to terms of imprisonment, they have been subjected to the ordinary prison discipline and to the ordinary prison rules; and, whether, during their imprisonment, they have had to clean out their cells and to wear prison dress in common with other prisoners, and to take exercise with other prisoners.

MR. MATTHEWS: The answer to both paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he does not consider that a disgraceful fact?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

IRELAND—THOMAS TRACY.

MR. M'CARTAN: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the treatment of the bail prisoner Tracy, recently removed from Belfast to Millbank Prison, whether he can now say if the prison authorities supply dinners of joint, dessert, and beer or porter, to bail prisoners in Ireland; and, if not, whether such dinners were supplied at the expense of the proprietor of the *Times* to Tracy during his imprisonment at Belfast, or by whom these dinners were supplied to him there; whether he will state by whom the *Freeman's Journal*, containing reports of the proceedings at the Special Commission, was supplied to Tracy daily at Belfast Gaol; and, whether the Prisons Board, while

allowing him to be visited by officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary to get up evidence for the Special Commission, without the presence of a warder, refused to grant such visits to the solicitors acting for him, and who at his request made application to be allowed similar visits?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As this is the first Question asked me, and as there are several on the paper relating to this matter, I may explain the action the Government have taken, or are supposed to have taken, in connection with the Special Commission. The Government consider it their duty to aid the parties in this as they would in any other judicial investigation. They will afford that aid to either party, but hitherto only one party has been giving evidence, and the Government have afforded such information as has been asked for. With regard to the Question on the paper, I understand that the prison authorities do not provide bail prisoners with food and drink of the nature indicated in the Question. The dinners supplied to Tracy at Belfast were not at the expense of the proprietor of the *Times*, nor had they any connection whatever with the Special Commission trial, but were provided by the police authorities in connection with a totally different matter. A newspaper was also supplied to the man under precisely the same circumstances. I am informed that the man was not visited by officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary for the purpose alleged in the last paragraph. I am not aware whether it is the case, as alleged, that the solicitors acting for the prisoner were refused admittance, but have directed inquiry to be made.

Mr. DILLON: As the right hon. Gentleman has stated that the Government feel themselves bound to aid either party in obtaining evidence, will he undertake to produce the informer Cullinane, whom he refused to produce on Friday?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not consider that refusing to give up the name of an informer, whose life might thereby be endangered, is "refusing aid" to either party.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Le Caron was an informer?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I know nothing about Le Caron.

Mr. SEXTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman explain why it was that when Tracy's solicitors at Belfast applied to see the prisoner on a matter affecting his liberty the right was refused to them?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not received any information on that point.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is not Cullinane the man whom hon. Gentlemen have declared ought not to be believed on his oath?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE CLONMEL DISTURBANCE.

Mr. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the report in the *Freeman's Journal* of the 4th instant, of the assault made by the police on the people at and outside the railway station, Clonmel, on the arrival of Dr. Tanner, M.P., there on Sunday morning last; whether he will give the name of the policeman who told the representative of the *Tipperary Nationalist* to "go to the devil," on his asking to see the sergeant in charge, with the view to get admission to the station as a pressman; whether he will also give the name of the constable who on that occasion said "that they were determi ed to make these fellows smell pepper to night;" whether he is aware that this reporter was afterwards, when quietly standing against the wall, attacked by constables, who assaulted him with batons, and caused him to bleed profusely, by inflicting several severe wounds on him; whether it is true, as reported, that the police subsequently set upon the people indiscriminately, using their batons freely on every person within their reach; whether he will give the name of the officer who is alleged to have brandished his naked sword at the prison gate, swinging it about in the face of the people; and, whether, considering the number of innocent persons maltreated and wounded, he will cause an independent inquiry to be made into all the circumstances in connection with the alleged illegal conduct of the police?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: As this Question appears in this morning's paper without previous notice I have not been able to receive a detailed reply. I have, however, received the following telegraphic report on the subject:—

"Report in to-day's *Freeman* of occurrences at Clonmel on Tanner's arrival on Sunday morning much exaggerated: some stones were thrown at police, who, using their batons, at once dispersed all crowds; no one seriously injured. It is true that a military officer at chapel ordered soldiers to leave: attempts were made outside to roughly handle him, but police at once interfered. Warrant to arrest man who committed assault was issued."

HOUSING OF THE POOR.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has now made arrangements for the reprint in a cheap and popular form of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, and of Mr. Burnett's Report on the Condition of the Nail and Chainmakers; whether he is aware of the difficulty Mr. Burnett experiences in obtaining statistics from the various societies to whom he applies for Returns; and, whether he could make any arrangements to facilitate his work in this respect?

MR. MATTHEWS: Arrangements have been made and the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor will shortly appear in a cheaper form. No arrangements have been made by me as to the re-issue of Mr. Burnett's Report. This is a matter for the Board of Trade. I am informed by the Board of Trade that they are aware of the difficulties experienced by Mr. Burnett, but they hope to make some arrangements by which more extended information will be obtained.

POLICE PROCLAMATIONS.

MR. CONYBEARE: I have to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the proclamations issued by the late Commissioner of Police are still being acted upon by the present Chief Commissioner; and, if so, by what authority does he continue to keep in force such proclamations?

MR. MATTHEWS: The order of the late Commissioner of Police has never been revoked, and is maintained by the same authority as that under which it was issued.

MR. CONYBEARE: On whose authority were these proclamations issued?

MR. MATTHEWS: Under the authority of the Commissioner of Police.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Police Act gives no authority to issue such proclamations?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; I am aware of the exact opposite.

MR. CONYBEARE: I will call attention to this matter on the Police Vote.

THE POLICE AT PUBLIC MEETINGS.

MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has made any inquiry, and with what result, as to why and by whose authority one inspector of police and six constables were told off for special duty in Abbey Street, Bethnal Green, on Wednesday evening last, on the occasion of a lecture by the hon. Member for Camborne in the Bethnal Green Radical Club; and whether the orders issued to the police authorize them to go into private houses and demand copies of placards announcing such a lecture when they can read them posted on the walls in the street?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have made inquiry, and am informed that, in accordance with the usual practice of the police, one police sergeant and four constables were told off to preserve order in case of need in the vicinity of the meeting at the Bethnal Green Radical Club on Wednesday last. No orders on the subject have been issued by the police authorities, but the practice is for the police to obtain copies of bills announcing meetings, when they can do so without offence, in order to ascertain the probable character of the meeting and the police precautions which ought to be taken for the protection of those who attend.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the bills convening this meeting were posted on the walls of a street adjoining the club, and that there was absolutely no necessity for the police to insult private people by demanding them?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have read the report of the police constable, and there is not a word to show that he insulted anybody.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a notice to the following effect is posted

up in the waiting room at the office of the solicitor of the *Times* newspaper:—

"To Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Members of the above force will please enter their names in the book kept in the office for that purpose. Signed (by Order),

F. B. Lopdell, County Inspector."

By whose authority was the said inspector permitted to post such a notice in the office of a private firm of solicitors; and, whether he will cause an authenticated copy of such book, containing the names of the Royal Irish Constabulary who have frequented Mr. Soames' chambers, to be placed upon the Table?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that it is the case that County Inspector Lopdell, who is the senior officer in charge of the members of the Constabulary Force in London, posted the notice referred to. He did so with a view to secure an efficient disciplinary supervision over the men, who would, as a matter of course, have to report their presence to the solicitors for the party at whose instance they were subpœnaed.

Mr. CONYBEARE: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph in my Question.

Mr. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I will not do as is asked.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. CAREW, M.P.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Carew, M.P., was yesterday removed from Kilkenny Prison to Kilmainham Prison; whether his clothes, which had been taken from him by violence on his arrival at Kilkenny, ten days before, were restored to him yesterday, before setting out for Kilmainham; and, whether his clothes will be again taken from him?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Orders were given on Saturday to transfer Mr. Carew to Kilmainham Prison, with a view of facilitating his communicating with his solicitor in connection with the libel action pending against him. I understand that, under the orders of the medical officer of the prison, he is at present wearing his own clothes.

Mr. SEXTON: Will his clothes be taken from him again?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: That depends on the medical officer.

Mr. CONYBEARE: How long does the Chief Secretary propose to continue these brutalities?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury how long Captain Plunkett and other Divisional and Resident Magistrates have been in London during the sitting of the Parnell Commission; what was the object of their protracted residence here beyond the time necessary to give their evidence; and, whether any of the Divisional or Resident Magistrates have collected evidence in Ireland, communicated with witnesses in London, or with the agents and counsel for the *Times* newspaper; and, if so, by what authority they absented themselves from their duties for such a purpose?

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman will have gathered from my answer to a previous Question that I cannot give a Return—at least, at the present time—with regard to the officials connected with the Irish Government who have been summoned to London on subpœna by the Court. He will also have gathered that their prolonged absence from Ireland has been a cause of inconvenience to the Irish Government, in respect of which we have strongly protested. They have resided in London for no other purpose than to give their evidence before the Commission. It does not rest with the Government to decide either the date at which they were summoned from Ireland or the date on which they have been or will be required to give their evidence in Court. I have no doubt that all the witnesses summoned by the *Times* have communicated with the agents and counsel of the *Times*.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the Question as to how long Captain Plunkett had been in London.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not answer that part of the Question because it appeared to me that the particulars required would be exactly of that kind which would be included in the Return asked for, among others, by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford, and by the right hon. Gentleman himself. I can, however, find out

for the right hon. Gentleman how long Captains Plunkett and Slacke have been in London. They were here simply on subpœna, and solely for the purpose of giving evidence; and allow me to say that the length of time these and other persons subpœnaed by the *Times* have been kept in London has been a cause of great inconvenience to the Government, against which we have seriously protested on more than one occasion.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will repeat my Question as to how long Captain Plunkett has been in London. I will now ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Royal Irish Constabulary have been employed to collect evidence, pay money to, and take the proofs of witnesses for the *Times* newspaper before the Parnell Commission; whether there is any precedent for such a course being followed, and the Constabulary being so employed, in proceedings between private persons or when the case was not one of a Crown prosecution; by whose authority the Constabulary have been so employed; and, whether he will give a Return of the number of Irish constables who have been in London since the commencement of the Commission; how long each has been detained from his duties; and what has been the nature of his employment?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not believe that any Divisional or Resident Magistrates have absented themselves from duty for the purposes indicated in the Question; but I have already stated that, in my opinion, it is the duty of the Government to give all the assistance in their power to the Commission. The Royal Irish Constabulary have not, so far as I know, been employed to pay money to, or take the proofs of, witnesses for the *Times* newspaper. With regard to the Return, I have already said that I do not think it can be laid on the Table of the House, at all events before the Commission ceases to sit.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that several witnesses for the *Times* actually swore that their evidence was taken by some of the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary? In proof of that, I may mention the name of the witness Iago.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of that fact. I believe that something of the kind was done at the original trial of "O'Donnell v. Walter." I lay down no general proposition on the point; but, as far as my information goes, no such transaction has taken place.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will also repeat this Question on Thursday, and meanwhile I will ask the right hon. Gentleman as to the matter of fact to consult the Attorney General, who sits by his side.

MR. CLANCY: Does the Attorney General deny that the agents of the Government have taken down evidence?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The House will, of course, understand—I do not wish that there should be any misapprehension on this point—that if a witness is called, be he connected with the Irish Government or not, it is his business to review in his own mind such information as he has got, and to confirm it in every possible way.

MR. CLANCY: I ask the Attorney General to answer that Question.

WOODS AND FORESTS.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have determined to refer to the same Select Committee the question of the administration of the Woods and Forests Department, and that of the disposal of Crown rights (especially of fishing) in Scotland by that Department, or whether they will adopt the view suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the debate on 8th November, and have a separate Select Committee mainly of Scottish Members to investigate the latter subject?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The terms of reference to the proposed Committee on the Woods and Forests Department will not exclude the disposal of Crown rights in Scotland from being investigated.

MR. BUCHANAN: But has not the Government determined to make a special reference to this subject on the ground that the Woods and Forests Department would not be the best tribunal to inquire into the question raised by the Scotch Members?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It would be difficult to exclude from the consideration of the Committee dealing with the administration of the Woods and Forests Department the question of the adminis-

tration of any part of the duties intrusted to them; and the Government, while quite willing to consider the question, would be unwilling to multiply Committees and to make a greater demand on the time of Members than appears to be absolutely necessary. But if it should appear that a Special Committee is necessary, the Government will not refuse it.

MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): Are we to understand that the Government has decided not to refer the subject of the Scottish salmon fisheries to a Select Committee?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman will see that the question of salmon fisheries is a question quite distinct from this question.

MR. BUCHANAN: Would it not be possible to refer the question of fishing rights in Scotland to the same Committee that the Government have expressed their intention of appointing, and will the Government say that until that inquiry is carried out no more sales of Crown rights in fishing will be made?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): There has been no undertaking whatever to appoint a Committee. In the course of the debate to which reference has been made an impression was formed in my own mind, and gave expression to that impression; but there was no pledge whatever, and the statement just made by the First Lord of the Treasury ought, it seems to me, to satisfy the hon. Member. If it should be found that the matter cannot be satisfactorily dealt with by one Committee, it will be the duty of the Government to consider the matter; but meantime the hon. Member is aware of the promise given by the Treasury on the subject.

CIVIL LIST PENSIONS.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the following recommendations with respect to Civil List pensions, which are contained in a work undertaken for and published by the Incorporated Society of Authors; that the sum of £1,200 be yearly voted for the purpose of assisting distinguished men and women of letters, art, and science, by granting pensions when they have arrived at the age of 55, or are incapacitated from work by ill-health, mental or bodily, and their widows or daughters, if they are in distressed circumstances; that under no circumstances whatever shall any portion of the money be granted to any persons for public services in the Army, Navy, or any Civil Department, to the Sovereign or to the Country, or to widows, children, or relations of such persons; and, whether he will consider the advisability of adopting any or all of these recommendations?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware of, nor have I seen, the publication alluded to by the hon. Member; but the recommendation seems to be that a sum of £1,200 should be placed on the Estimates for providing pensions for distinguished men and women of letters, art, and science. I have great doubts as to the expediency of submitting such a proposition to the House. The language of the second recommendation is of a very involved nature, but the answer I have given above will probably be sufficient.

SUGAR BOUNTIES.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Baron H. de Worms) when he proposes to bring in the Bill made necessary by the Sugar Bounties Convention?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS): That is a Question for my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House.

MR. PICTON: Then perhaps the First Lord of the Treasury will tell us when the Bill will be brought forward?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not in a position to say when that Bill will be introduced, but full notice will be given of it.

CONVERSION OF STOCK.

MR. MOLLOY (Queen's County, Birr): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if it be a fact that he has cancelled a considerable portion of the outstanding Three Per Cent Consolidated Debt, by exchanging it for Local Loans Stock at a price below the quotation current in the market, and how much below the current quotation;

by what means he obtains command of the Local Loans Stock for this purpose; and, whether he proposes to increase the Floating Debt to the extent of the uncancelled portion of the Three Per Cents by an issue of Exchequer bonds, and so burden the market with that form of security?

*MR. GOSCHEN: It is a fact that the National Debt Commissioners have bought a considerable amount of the outstanding Three per Cents, though not so large an amount as I have seen stated in the Press, and have also sold Local Loans Stock to some of the parties from whom they bought those Three per Cents. In fixing the price at which to sell the Local Loans Stock, the Commissioners have been able to arrive at, and to act upon, the closest possible estimate of its market value in large amounts, from the fact that tenders amounting to £7,000,000 were lately received for the two and a-half millions of Local Loans Stock offered to the public. The terms of such tenders afford something like an infallible test of the present market value of the Stock. The Local Loans Stock thus sold by the National Debt Commissioners was obtained by them at par in exchange for Consols and for the bonds of the Public Works Loan Board, both at par. As the amount of Local Loans Stock held by the Commissioners on behalf of savings banks was very large, and as the Stock for some time was not as current as was desirable, it has been a great incidental advantage to interest large banks and other leading institutions in this Stock, the future of which, as the means of raising money for various local purposes claiming the aid of public credit, is of such immense importance to the community. In reply to the third paragraph of the Question, I do not propose to create Floating Debt to the extent of the still uncancelled portion of the Three per Cents by an issue of Exchequer bonds; but when I introduce the Bill for completing the conversion I shall ask Parliament to allow me a very free hand in dealing with the responsible task of paying off so large a sum.

MR. MOLLOY: Is it then the fact that Local Loan Stocks were sold at prices below the quotation current in the market at the time?

*MR. GOSCHEN: I have explained to the hon. Member that the prices at which they were sold were fixed in accordance with tenders which were made for Stock in large amounts, and which afforded a much better estimate of the real value of the Stock than a single transaction in a single day on the Stock Exchange. I must ask to be relieved from answering Questions as to the exact prices which are obtained by the National Debt Commissioners. I am dealing with very shrewd men of business, and if, by means of answers in this House, they obtain the opportunity of looking over my hand, while I cannot look over theirs, the public interest will be placed at a very great disadvantage.

MR. MOLLOY: I will not press the right hon. Gentleman for any more information now, but I beg to give notice that I will call attention to the matter on a future day.

MOTIONS.

NEW WRIT.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. A. AKERS-DOUGLAS) (Kent, St. Augustine's): I beg to move, "That Mr. Speaker issue a Writ for Lambeth (Kennington Division), in the room of Mr. Robert Gent-Davis, on his acceptance of the Chiltern Hundreds."

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I do not propose to resist the Motion. I do not call in question the right of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to grant the Chiltern Hundreds to Mr. Gent-Davis, nor do I intend to say a word against Mr. Gent-Davis, now no longer a Member of this House. But I desire to call attention to the singular circumstances under which this Motion is made. So long ago as November last a communication was made to the Speaker by Mr. Justice North to the effect that Mr. Gent-Davis had been committed to prison for contempt of Court in appropriating to his own use and neglecting to pay into Court, in obedience to the order of the Court, a large sum of money received by him in a fiduciary manner. There can be no doubt, in the face of the communication of the Judge, that Mr. Gent-Davis was convicted of having committed a breach of trust in a money transaction. There is equally no doubt

that the established practice of this House in cases of this kind is to vindicate its honour by the expulsion of the Member guilty of such a transaction. I will only refer to one authority. A Predecessor of yours, Sir, in the Chair, Lord Colchester, in the case of Benjamin Walsh, explained that a breach of trust in a money transaction justified expulsion from the House, and added that the principle extended not only to public but to private property, and that it was commonly the practice of Parliament first to vindicate its own honour, and then to consign the individual offender to legal prosecution. Now, after the communication from Mr. Justice North had been received by the Speaker, the First Lord of the Treasury, the guardian of the honour of this House, was asked what steps he proposed to take, and the right hon. Gentleman said—

"I do not think it will be my duty to ask the House to take any action in the matter. I am not in possession of information which would justify me in taking that course. I should take upon myself a serious responsibility if I were to proceed, even upon the report of the learned Judge, to ask the House to pronounce judgment upon the financial transactions of the hon. Member."

I thought that answer so astounding, that I asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he had been advised in the matter, and I received no reply. I can only say that whatever advice the right hon. Gentleman might have received upon the subject was bad advice. Apparently to prevent any misconception as to the nature of the offence of which Mr. Gent-Davis was guilty, Mr. Justice North again, in January, in open Court, put on record the nature of this financial transaction. He said that if proceedings in a Criminal Court had been taken against Mr. Gent-Davis, and if he had been convicted, the period of his imprisonment would have been longer than the imprisonment which he had endured. After all that, the First Lord of the Treasury has taken no steps. Even now he has not taken any, but permitted Mr. Gent-Davis to purge the House, to vindicate the honour of the House, by applying for the Chiltern Hundreds. There is only one other point which I wish to bring to the notice of the House. Her Majesty's Government have sinned with their eyes open and with full knowledge. Last year one of the projects of legislation of the Government was known as the "Black Sheep Bill," the main object of which, as stated by the Prime Minister, was to confer upon the House of Lords the same power of dealing with unworthy Members which, he said, the House of Commons already possessed; and one of the main clauses of the Bill was that the report of a Judge that one of the Members of the House of Lords had been guilty of unworthy conduct should be sufficient to justify the House in taking action against that Member. I propose to leave the matter here. As I have said, I did not rise to oppose the Motion. I simply with to put on record my own emphatic protest against the action, or rather the inaction, of the Government in this matter. I do not know whether the First Lord of the Treasury will think it necessary to give any explanation; but, in my opinion, no explanation will relieve the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues from the charge which I now make, that throughout the whole of this painful affair they have been indifferent to the honour of the House, and that by such indifference they have violated one of the best and worthiest traditions of the House of Commons.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The hon. and learned Gentleman, without giving me any notice, has thought it right to charge me with being indifferent to the honour of the House. I emphatically deny that charge, and I shall be content to leave myself to the judgment of the House when I have made my explanation. I wish to recall the attention of the House to the circumstances of the case. The hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) gave notice that he would move the expulsion of the hon. Member for Kennington. That Gentleman was not in his place and could not be in his place in the House, and the hon. and learned Member for Longford withdrew that notice, in order that he might bring the question forward at a time when the hon. Gentleman could be in his place in the House and give an answer to the charge which the hon. and learned Member said he would make against him. I am charged with indifference to the honour of this House. It is one of the gravest charges

which could be made against a man holding the position which I have the honour to fill. I stated, when the matter was previously before the House, that at least one of the duties of the Leader of the House is to be exceedingly careful how he proceeds to deal with a question affecting the personal honour of Members of this House. I have always stated that that is as responsible a duty as any other duty imposed upon me. Complaint has been made that when a charge of apparent irregularity and breach of trust was brought against Mr. Gent-Davis I did not instantly take steps for his expulsion. We indicated that if it were the desire of any hon. Member to bring the conduct of the late Member for Kennington under the notice of the House, the Government would not issue the Chiltern Hundreds to him, so that he might still remain within the jurisdiction of the House. I should have been the first to agree to any inquiry into the conduct of Mr. Gent-Davis. But, as reference has been made to my conduct and the duties imposed upon me, I must remind the hon. and learned Member that there are cases within the knowledge of this House of breaches of trust of the most serious character, which have been committed, and which, as far as this House is concerned, have been condoned, not by the action of Her Majesty's Government, not at the request of Her Majesty's Government, by the issue of the Chiltern Hundreds. But I do not wish to enter upon an explanation of those cases. The honour and character of individual Members of this House is the cherished possession of the House itself; and I say again that I should have been unworthy of the position I occupy if I had made use of the power which is placed in my hands to put an hon. Member in a position of extreme personal difficulty, unless charges were brought before this House which could be investigated, and which could properly form a subject of investigation. I am content with the explanation I have given. I believe that at the time I answered the Question I answered it to the satisfaction of the House itself; and I am not conscious that I have departed from the terms of it.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): Like my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. E. Robertson), I certainly do not rise for the purpose of opposing in any way the issue of this Writ, or for the purpose of condemning the Government for issuing under these circumstances the Chiltern Hundreds. I admit that at first the grant in a case of this kind raised considerable doubts in my mind. But on examining the matter, and on the authority of the book to which we always refer in these matters, I found that in recent years all words have been omitted from the grant of the Chiltern Hundreds which formerly attached to those offices. In old days there was a record that the Chiltern Hundreds had been granted in consequence of the honourable services of Members.

MR. GLADSTONE: And shining virtues.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The honourable services and shining virtues of the Member who took the post. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, who probably had some experience himself of the difficulties in these cases, ordered those words to be removed from the grant of the Chiltern Hundreds. Therefore there is no objection to be raised on that score. It is a very inconvenient method—probably belonging to those numerous anomalies which we cherish in the English Constitution—that there should be no other form for a Member resigning his seat in Parliament; and I think it would be well worthy the consideration of the House to inquire whether a simpler method of resignation should not be established by the House. I have no word of criticism or condemnation to make on the grant of the Chiltern Hundreds by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. E. Robertson) has raised a different question, and that is whether the Government ought not earlier, of their own accord, to have taken this matter in hand. In this regard I do not desire to press the thing too hardly against the Government or the Leader of the House; but I was glad to take notice of his admission of the fact that the honour of Members of this House is the first duty of the First Lord of the Treasury. Later on, perhaps, we may have cause to ask him to discharge that primary duty. But the right hon. Gentleman has said—and the plea was certainly good and valid—that in the first in-

stance he objected to acting because the hon. Member whose conduct was in question was not able to be present. But when the Member was able to answer for himself—when he was at large—I confess that I should have thought that the persons to take the first action in this matter, by compelling the retirement of the Member in one form or another, would have been Her Majesty's Government, and the First Lord of the Treasury as principally responsible to the House. We know very well that, in the case of persons who ought not to be allowed to fulfil offices of public trust, sometimes their retirement is obtained by the process of enforced resignation, or by public dismissal; and in one form or another I should have thought that it was the duty of the Leader of the House to see that one of these courses was taken. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to cases where breaches of trust have been condoned by the grant of the Chiltern Hundreds. But he must allow me to draw a broad and clear distinction between cases where there has been an open and public Judgment, and cases where the facts are only known by general rumour. The cases are very different, especially with regard to the action of Her Majesty's Government. It is very difficult and almost impossible for a responsible Minister to act on a rumour, however credible it may be; but it is a totally different thing when there is a legal Judgment, as was the case in the matter before the House; because the Judgments of the Court of Chancery are just as much legal Judgments as the Judgments in the Common Law or Criminal Courts. Without desiring to press the matter too hardly, I think it ought to be recognized that, where there is a legal pronouncement in Court on the misconduct of a Member of the House of Commons, the persons who ought to take the earliest and first initiative in the matter are Her Majesty's Government. It ought not to be left to anyone else. I only make these remarks because the right hon. Gentleman said that anyone else might have taken action. That is quite true; but it is primarily the duty of the Leader of this House to take notice of these Judgments in the Courts of Law. That is all I desire to say in the matter, and I hope that I have not said it in any manner offensive to Gentlemen on the opposite bench, because I know the delicacy and difficulty of performing a duty of this character, and I hope that, without further comment, the Writ will be allowed to be issued.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I rise to point out that between the manner of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down and the manner of the hon. and learned Member who opened this discussion there is a very marked and agreeable contrast. It may be a question of judgment as to whether or not action ought to have been taken in the matter before; but the hon. Member for Dundee has gone further. He has said that the First Lord of the Treasury has violated the best traditions of the House; and that in his position as Leader of the House he has shown himself in a marked degree insensible of the dignity of the House. I venture to repudiate every word of that charge. I believe that the vast majority of Gentlemen on the other side of the House do not approve of such allegations against the right hon. Gentleman. When the hon. Member for Dundee brings a charge of this kind against the Leader of the House of Commons he places himself in a remarkably inconsistent position when he follows it up by saying that he intends to take no further action. If it is true that the Leader of the House has shown himself absolutely insensible of the honour of this Assembly, it is perfectly clear that he has no right to occupy such an exalted position. I do not say this as a Member of the Conservative Party, but as a Member of the House of Commons. I say that such charges against the Leader of the House ought not to be made unless further action is intended. The hon. Member for Dundee ought to withdraw these charges, or ought not to be allowed to let them rest as they at present stand.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I should like to make a personal explanation. My statement was really in the nature of a syllogism. I stated that it is not denied that the First Lord and his colleagues are the guardians of the honour of the House, and that it is not denied that it is the practice of the House to vindicate its honour by taking immediate notice of charges such as those which have been made against Mr. Gent-Davis. I inferred that in not taking immediate

action the First Lord of the Treasury and his colleagues have been indifferent to their duty to the House.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) said that his mind had been exercised as to whether the Chiltern Hundreds ought to have been granted in this case; and he stated that he had come to the conclusion that there was little discretion left to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that my mind was equally exercised; and I thought, like the right hon. Gentleman, that it was right to look very thoroughly into the matter. Looking, however, to the precedents and to what has been laid down on the subject, I thought it was my duty to grant the Chiltern Hundreds. And in this course the right hon. Gentleman concurs. It was stated by the First Lord that, there being some delay while I was looking into this matter, a communication was made by my right hon. Friend who sits behind me to the Member for Nottingham (Mr. A. Morley), so that the opportunity might be given to any hon. Member of the House to bring the matter forward. The Government had not the slightest intention of withdrawing the matter from the cognizance of the House. Then the right hon. Gentleman, in language of which no one can complain, spoke of the delicacy of the question as to what action should be taken by the Executive Government in a matter of this kind. I think that the right hon. Gentleman rather indicated than declared that it was the duty of the Government at once to act, but he said that he would not pass any censure on the Government with regard to the matter. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it is a matter of extreme delicacy to determine in what instances the Executive Government is to act. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the Executive should act in cases where the Court has laid down that an hon. Member of this House has been guilty of misconduct.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I should rather have said a fraud of a monetary character.

*MR. GOSCHEN: That narrows the doctrine extremely. I thought it right to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the very wide doctrine he had laid down. I am sure the House will feel that it is extremely difficult for the Government to discriminate what kind of fraud, what kind of misconduct, ought to lead to the expulsion of a Member of this House. There might be meny cases where a question would arise with regard to the action of political opponents, and I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will see that it would be an extremely delicate matter for the Government to determine whether in consequence of certain actions, certain declarations made by a Court, a Government ought at once to proceed. I am glad that attention has been called to the Question, because it is a matter equally interesting to all sections of the House. The doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman would carry us very far, and its application would be attended with considerable difficulties; but I accept the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman that he does not think this a matter in which the Executive Government is deserving of censure.

MR. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): A case of this kind is so important in its bearing as to the proceedings and character of the House that it is very likely to be made a subject of reference hereafter, and therefore it is desirable that we should understand with perfect clearness what is the ground upon which we take up our position. The First Lord of the Treasury made a reference to certain cases which were quite distinct from the case now immediately in question—certain other cases where it appeared that there was misconduct not less gross than that which appears to exist in the present instance. I believe that it was my own ill-fortune many years ago to grant the Chiltern Hundreds without any question in the House —without any possibility, I think, of refusing to grant it—to one gentleman, at least, who was afterwards the subject of a criminal sentence. But then there was no knowledge — though there may have been suspicion and misgiving—upon which it could have been possible to have alleged any ground for withholding the grant of the Chiltern Hundreds; and that appears to me to be the fundamental and the exclusive distinction we have to draw. Neither the First Lord of the

Treasury, nor the Government, nor the House, can act in these cases except on facts which are patent, solid, and indisputable. It is not a case, as I understand it, where the Court has laid down that a Member of the House has been guilty of certain conduct. As I understand, it is a case where the Court, after a full investigation, has arrived at a solemn judgment upon it, and, moreover, it is a case where the Court has arrived at that judgment with the party possessing the unquestioned right of appeal against the judgment, but which he has not thought fit to use. I express my entire concurrence in what has been said by my right hon. Friend. I think with him that the First Lord of the Treasury would have been better advised if he had taken steps in the matter, in the discharge of the onerous and delicate duties which appertain to him in his high position; but I will not push that opinion to the length of saying that it is a proper subject for any formal censure. I hope we shall agree that no resistance is to be offered to the Motion, and I also hope that two practical results, both of which will be beneficial, may follow from the notice that has been properly taken of the question by my hon. and learned Friend. I am not going to censure the Chancellor of the Exchequer for not having altered the mode which our Constitution provides for the dismissal or withdrawal of Members from this House, because he would have the very powerful retort against me of asking why I had not done it myself. I am far from saying that the question is not a difficult one. I am far from saying that it is a question so urgent as to merit a primary claim on the attention of the Government; but it is, in my opinion, a question well deserving the attention of the House on every suitable opportunity. The whole method of providing for the withdrawal of Members of this House is at present wrong. It ought not to depend on the discretion of a Minister of the Crown, although I am bound to say I know of no case in which a Chancellor of the Exchequer of either Party has committed any gross error in the dispensing of that discretion. It ought to depend on some machinery and judgment devised by this House, and expressive of the mind, the authority, and the conviction of the House itself. On the general question of the withdrawal of Members of the House in thi connection, I will go one step further, and express this hope—that if, unhappily—God forbid it should occur—a similar case, or similar conduct similarly attested, were to recur, it might be thought by the Government of the day to be a matter in which it would be desirable to invoke the assistance of the House to bring it under the full and definite consideration of the House, not necessarily by assuming the responsibility at once of a formal Motion, but by examining carefully, and with the authority of the House, into the precedents, and then putting it fully into the position of determining what course ought to be taken. It ought not to be dealt with as a matter of routine and as a matter of course. The affair is too serious to be practically decided within the single mind of the Leader of the House, and I trust that in the event of an unhappy recurrence of such a case as this there will be a determination to submit the facts to the entire consideration and judgment of the House, with the view of laying down a rule applicable to such circumstances.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I do not think that the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have succeeded in exculpating themselves from the charges which have been brought against them. It has to be borne in mind that the letter of the Judge, which was read in this House on November 28th, was dated November 27th, and that, although he did not use the word "fraud" in the letter, still in the Judgment he used the word "fraud," and convicted the hon. Member on the charge. The First Lord of the Treasury endeavoured to establish a parallel between the case of Mr. Gent-Davis and another most painful case with which we have been made acquainted by the newspapers. But, Sir, there is no analogy whatever between the two cases. There is a great deal of difference in the moral guilt of a man who falls a victim, after a long and laborious life, to over-speculation, and that of a man brought down by personal extravagance. But that is not the distinction which I wish to establish. The case referred to by the First Lord of the Treasury was not adjudicated upon until the hon. Member implicated had ceased to be a Member of the House; but in this

case the adjudication was made while the hon. Member for Kennington was still a Member of the House, and it was not until months afterwards that the Government took action in the matter. They allowed the hon. Gentleman to remain a Member of this House some months after a decision given against him by a properly constituted tribunal. The Government say they gave us plenty of opportunity to initiate a discussion antagonistic to Mr. Gent-Davis, but it is not the duty of the Opposition to move in matters of this kind. It is for the Government to deal with a Gentleman whose presence here is descreditable to the dignity and honour of the House. We know pretty well the secret history of this transaction. The First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer put off moving this Writ as long as they could, and now they have only moved it in obedience to pressure and owing to necessity. The Government know that they are going to be beaten in the election which this Writ involves. The First Lord of the Treasury said that there ought to be the greatest delicacy in making attacks on the honour of a Member of the House. That observation would have been most becoming if it had proceeded from any Member except the chief vendor of "Parnellism and Crime."

*Sir C. LEWIS (Antrim, N.): I wish to point out that the whole of the facts have not even now been laid before the House. The whole case has been altered since the communication made by the Judge to the Speaker by the fact that the whole of the money for the non-payment of which the hon. Member was attached for contempt was paid after his going to prison. The tone of the speeches on this subject made from the front Opposition bench contrast strongly with that of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, which contained an inconsiderate and cruel attack on a man who has already suffered severely. Such an attack is perfectly unworthy of a Member of this House, especially considering that it is directed against a man who has not only been punished for the offence he has committed, but has wiped out that offence by the payment of every farthing of the money involved in the case.

*Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I had not intended to intervene in this debate, and should not have done so if the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir C. Lewis), of all people in the world, had not come forward as an upholder of the dignity of this House. I think I may remind the hon. Baronet that I have had occasion in this House to charge him with grave breaches of trust——

*Mr. SPEAKER: I must call the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman to the fact that it is out of order to introduce into this discussion matters which are distinctly foreign to it.

*Mr. CONYBEARE: I will not remind the hon. Baronet further of transactions which he knows but too well, and of which he has no reason to be proud——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*Mr. CONYBEARE: Well, with reference to an argument the hon. Baronet used at the end of his speech, and to which, I believe, I am permitted to reply—where he said that the whole money was repaid by this unfortunate gentleman whose case we are discussing, I wish to observe that that is not the case, that it is absolutely untrue, and that the hon. Baronet must know, as everyone else, that although Mr. Gent-Davis was helped by hon. Members on his own side of the House, he had never himself paid a farthing back.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): Is it not an extremely strange thing that Mr. Gent-Davis should have been defended from the benches opposite by an hon. Baronet who was himself unseated for bribery and corruption?

Motion agreed to.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

*The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith, Strand, Westminster): I beg to move that the House at its rising do adjourn until to-morrow at two o'clock.

Motion made, and Question put.

*Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow College): As there is every probability of the time of the House being devoted to Scotch business to-morrow, and as the Scotch Members pay no attention to Ash Wednesday, I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that he should not insist upon this Motion. The great majority of Scotch Members are Presbyterian, and do not observe Ash Wednesday,

and they would much rather go on with the business of the House at 12 o'clock, than have the meeting put off till two. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not press the Motion, as otherwise it will be my duty to divide the House against it.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House will meet to-morrow at Two of the Clock."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

The House *divided:* — Ayes, 193; Noes, 112.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): In rising to move, "That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Queen's Speech, Motion for an Address, have precedence this day of Notices of Motion and other Orders of the Day," I wish to make an appeal to hon. Gentlemen who have given notice of Amendments to the Address. The House is aware that we have already reached the tenth day of discussion of the Address, and also that very serious and important business must be disposed of before the 18th or 19th of March, financial business of the current year, the matter being of such urgent importance to the House and the country that we ought to proceed to it as speedily as possible, and I would earnestly appeal to hon. Members to allow the debate on the Address to conclude this evening. I am aware there are suggestions of considerable importance in Motions which stand in the name of hon. Members, but I may remind them that during the course of the Session there will be, I fully hope, an opportunity for urging their views before the House and the country. The House is aware that the prolongation of the Debate on the Address has had the practical effect of depriving some hon. Members of their ordinary opportunities for bringing forward Motions and Bills in which they are interested. Under these circumstances I trust that hon. Members will themselves concur in the view I have heard expressed more than once that the debate on the Address should be limited, and that we should then proceed as rapidly as we can with the important business we have to dispose of. I trust I may have the support of right hon. Gentlemen opposite in enforcing that view.

Motion made, and Question put.

MR. GLADSTONE (Mid Lothian): I find great satisfaction in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, for he conveyed to Members, as I understand, as an inducement to assent to his proposal, that they would have fitter opportunities to bring under the notice of the House those matters they desire to raise. I trust I am justified in inferring from that general intimation that the Government do not contemplate during the present Session any great invasion of the time appropriated to private Members. I certainly am one of those who are of opinion that the great length to which debates on the Address have been prolonged of late years is a serious impediment to the important business awaiting disposal. Of course, I do not speak of the Amendment of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, because that was a Motion of a very serious character, raising distinctly the question of the existence of the Government, such a question as it has always been usual to raise upon the Address. I refer to a custom which is growing up, that of making the Address the occasion for discussing subjects—of public importance undoubtedly—I do not say frivolous matters, but matters that might be more appropriately discussed under the ancient course of allowing Members a fair proportion of the time of the House. But I do not propose to enter into that now. At present we have before us the fact that, independent of the debate upon the Irish Amendment, we have had three nights of general debate, and are about to have a fourth without any interruption. Under these circumstances, and in view of the nature of the business that is to come on—Government and possibly other business of an urgent character—I certainly think the right hon. Gentleman has made a reasonable appeal, and one that we so far as we can, compatibly with what we deem to be our specific duty, will respond to, and bring about the close of the debate to-night. I have a few words to say on one of the subjects standing for discussion, but I will give a pledge that undoubtedly in what I then say I shall have

a lively recollection of what I am now saying, for I am quite in sympathy with the wish of the right hon. Gentleman.

Motion agreed to.

BURIALS BILL.

On the Motion of Mr. Osborne Morgan, Bill to further to amend the Burial Laws, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Channing, Mr. Handel Cossham, Mr. John Ellis, and Mr. Illingworth.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 146.]

LIFE AND PROPERTY PROTECTION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Mattinson, Bill for the better protection by night of Life and Property, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mattinson, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. James William Lowther, and Mr. Forrest Fulton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 147.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st February.]—[See page 41.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green' S.W.): I rise to move as an Amendment to the Address an expression of our regret that the Royal Speech contains no proposal for legislation to safeguard the long-accustomed right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square. Notwithstanding the appeal which has been addressed to the House, I think, considering in the first place that in the Royal Speech London questions are totally ignored, and in the second place having regard to the extreme gravity of the question my Amendment raises, I am justified in the course I am now taking. The House will probably remember that shortly after the opening of the Session of 1888 the hon. and learned Member for Hackney brought forward a Resolution proposing the appointment of a Committee to consider the provisions under which public meetings are held in London, and the limits of the right of interference with such meetings by the Executive. That Motion was opposed by the Government, and after a long discussion it was defeated. Now, the attitude of the Government towards this Motion, coupled with the brutal violence which the Government have been responsible for, employed on November 13 against non-offending citizens, left—and I think not unnaturally left—a rankling resentment in the minds of a very considerable portion of the people of London. There were some men, as there are some men now—and I regret it—who desired to fight the Government with their own weapons. They desired to retake the right which the Government had defrauded them of by force and violence, but there were others who were extremely anxious to try this question upon its merits in a Court of Law. Well now, what was the attitude of the Government in regard to the latter class of persons? There was only one case arising out of the Trafalgar Square incident which raised the right fairly on its merits, and that was the case of Mr. Saunders. The Government commenced a prosecution against that gentleman, but almost immediately dropped it. Then a civil action was commenced in the name of Mr. Saunders for assault, in order to obtain a decision on the merits of the question. Unfortunately, the formal notice, which by statute is required, was not given in time, and the authorities sheltered themselves under this legal technicality, and so, for the second time, the law-abiding portion of the people who desired to raise the question were defeated in their object. The second case arose on a summons heard at Bow Street, and the police obtained a conviction. Mr. Vaughan, the Magistrate, was requested to state a case for the decision of a Superior Court, and agreed to do so. After long delay the case was stated, but then it was found that the case, as stated, was utterly absurd with reference to the point we desired to raise. The case, as stated by Mr. Vaughan, amounted to this—that the Queen's Bench Division were asked, in fact, whether an illegal meeting held in Trafalgar Square was an illegal meeting? Well, we do not want to go to the Queen's Bench Division to decide that; we know that an illegal meeting in Trafalgar Square or anywhere else is illegal. There was on the part of the Government the strongest reluctance to come into Court on the merits of the case, a

reluctance which generally, I think we may say, accompanies the consciousness of having a very bad case. But I do not desire to treat this question within the limits of a bare strict legal argument. It always seems to me that the House of Commons is not the place for a purely legal argument, but it must be obvious to the House that there are many rights which possibly one could not vindicate in a Court of Law, and yet rights, properly so-called, which a Government ought not to take away, which no wise Government would ever dream of taking away. How does the case stand in regard to Trafalgar Square? In the first place, I shall carefully avoid, as much as possible, the arguments which were gone over last year. But, at all events, we have this fact—that for nearly 40 years prior to November 13th, 1887, there had been the user of Trafalgar Square for the purpose of public meeting; nay, more, on one occasion, about 20 years ago, when there was a desire to hold a large public demonstration in Hyde Park, the organizers of the demonstration were told by the Government of the day that Trafalgar Square was the proper place in which to hold such a meeting. Last year the Home Secretary drew attention to the fact, and insisted upon it, that before November 13th there had been a series of daily meetings in the Square, with regard to which meetings I just want to say that if it is said that it would be unreasonable that mass meetings should be held every day in Trafalgar Square, and at any hour of any day, I quite agree with that. I think that it would be an unreasonable exercise of an undoubted right—an intolerant exercise of that right—because it would ignore the co-ordinate right of other persons, who dislike public meetings, and wish to use the Square for other purposes which are equally legitimate. But, whatever view you may take of the meetings that preceded that of November 13th, on what ground of law or reason can the Home Secretary defend the proclamation of the meeting of November 13th? The meetings before that day were called by one body of persons, and the meeting of November 13th was called by a totally different body of persons; and, although I said I should be anxious to avoid any strictly legal argument, I cannot refuse to allude to the Salvation Army decision, Beattie *v.* Gilbanks; and I respectfully submit to the House that the principle of that decision is distinctly against the proclamation of the meeting of November 13th. Besides, no connection has been proved between the organizers of that meeting and the organizers of the preceding meetings. That is the very essence of the case, because if any body of men are to be affected by the meetings of another body of men, then, I say, every liberty we possess is in danger. Just see how that would operate in practice. It only requires a small body of men to get up a disturbance at a public meeting in a public place on one day in order to justify the Government in proclaiming a meeting for a totally different purpose in the same place on a following day. Of course, those who organized the meeting would be responsible, but they cannot be affected by the incident of a meeting with which they had nothing whatever to do. Let me refer to the objections which have been urged to the holding of meetings in Trafalgar Square. It is said, in the first place, there is danger to property. Well, we all know it is an unfortunate fact that there is a large criminal class in London which always finds its harvest on every occasion when large masses of people are collected. The Home Secretary assents to that. Yes; but on the occasion of public illuminations, or on any occasion of a Royal procession, or when you want to pay a compliment to a Royal visitor, then you do everything in your power to collect the people in large masses, and the argument of danger to property, whatever it is worth, applies as much to such occasions as to those when citizens meet to discuss public questions. Then it is said the site is an inconvenient one for public meetings. Well, on that issue it is sufficient to point out that for 40 years it has been used for public meetings, which shows most clearly that it is a convenient site in the opinion of those who organize the meetings and attend them. I think the argument about convenience hardly lies in the mouths of those who are subject to the very grave suspicion of disliking public meetings altogether. Then it is said it is in the very heart of a great city, and an unsuitable place for public meetings. Now, I venture to submit that the heart of a great city is the proper place, and for this reason: when men have a griev-

ance and desire to come together, they assemble not merely to encourage one another, but also to make their grievance known to the powers that are able to relieve them. Therefore, it follows that publicity is the very essence of a political demonstration. To make that publicity as great as possible is one of the most legitimate purposes of all public demonstrations, and there is no place more fitting for that purpose than the centre of a large population. Now, there was one incident of which great use was made in the debate last year by the Government and the supporters of the Government. They relied on the riot which occurred in the neighbourhood of Trafalgar Square in February, 1886; but is it to be said that because there has occurred a solitary isolated act of violence and crime that, therefore, the Government are justified in taking away a long-accustomed popular right? I venture to think, if that argument is to hold good, that every liberty we and our fathers ever enjoyed is scarcely worth 24 hours' purchase. What, then, is our claim? I have indicated that I do not think it is reasonable that meetings should day by day be held in Trafalgar Square, but what I do ask the Government to do is this: to recognize the right of meeting in the Square, and to submit proposals for the regulation of that right. It seems sensible that this right should be regulated in order that it may be preserved. I would impress on the Government that the present position cannot be maintained. It is intolerable that a long-accustomed right should be taken away or withheld by the mere edict of a Commissioner of Police. Apart from the importance of the immediate occasion, I say it constitutes a most mischievous and dangerous precedent. I ask that the Government shall, at least, put the matter on a legal basis. There are three courses open to the Government to put this matter on a legal basis. In the first place they might withdraw the Chief Commissioner's edict; they might bring in a Bill to prohibit all meetings in Trafalgar Square—I should give it, I need hardly say, all the opposition in my power, but at all events it would be strictly and technically a legal proceeding—or they might bring in a Bill recognizing the right of meeting in the Square, and providing suitable regulations under which that right should be exercised. This last course I ask the Government to take. It is impossible, I think, to dissociate altogether this action from the changed attitude of the authorities in London towards public meetings in general. That there has been such a change is absolutely indisputable. No one who has any acquaintance with London, and takes an interest in public life, and who compares the attitude of the police towards public meetings to-day with the attitude of the police towards public meetings before the advent of the present Government, can doubt the evidence of a mischievous and alarming change. The Home Secretary says there has been no change in the general direction, given to the Metropolitan Police. I must, of course, and I do, accept the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. But I might perhaps, be permitted to point out to him that, when you are dealing with so delicate a question as the right of public meeting, even admitting that the general regulations in their letter remain the same, still the spirit in which they are administered and carried out may make the difference between a reasonable freedom and an intolerable tyranny. It was only the other day that I had occasion to call attention to a case which occurred in my own constituency. A member of the County Council for London, a gentleman for whom the esteem of his locality was sufficiently testified by the overwhelming majority of votes which he obtained in the recent election—Mr. Branch—is waited upon by a constable. It is said that the constable discharged his duty in a courteous manner. I dare say he did; I do not blame him; but I censure the system for which the right hon. Gentleman is responsible, and which compels a constable of the Metropolitan Police to do something which gives grave offence to a man occupying a high position in London. The right hon. Gentleman told me that the police were sent to the meeting for the purposes of protection. Protection! Why, the meeting was a small meeting in a club, to which, indeed, the public were invited. It was not even an open-air meeting, which would have given some colour to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. It is a public meeting held on private premises, addressed by a gentleman of high position, who is waited upon by a constable in the first place; and, in the

second place, half-a-dozen policemen are sent to crowd around the door, or in the neighbourhood of the meeting place. I say that indicates a marked change in the relations which once existed between the people of London and the Metropolitan Police. I desire to make an earnest appeal to the Government. I do not think that the present position is at all a tolerable position. We have had violence, and we have had bloodshed, mainly—I will not say entirely—on the part of the police. Now that sort of thing will inevitably cause rebellion. I have shown you what a rankling sense of resentment exists in the mind of a very considerable number of the people of London, and I am afraid that there will be trouble. I do, therefore, earnestly ask the Government to at least put the matter on a legal basis, and free us, at all events, from the disgrace of being deprived of what many of us believe to be a right by the edict of the Police Commissioner. If there should be violence and bloodshed, to which we have not been accustomed in the streets of London, then I must say that a terrible responsibility will rest upon the Government, in the first place because they have by every kind of artful contrivance succeeded in eluding a decision upon the merits of the case in a Court of Law, and in the second place because they have obstinately refused a settlement which would have given reasonable satisfaction to all parties. I beg, Sir, to move the Amendment of which I have given notice.

MR. STUART seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of Paragraph 11 to insert the words, "But we humbly express our regret that no proposals are made in Your Majesty's Gracious Speech to safeguard the long accustomed right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. MURDOCH (Reading): The hon. Member has brought forward this Amendment to the Address, and I cannot help thinking that in doing so he has shown by his speech that there is no necessity for it. On a previous occasion when this subject was discussed, the House had the advantage of hearing the opinions of some of the most eminent lawyers of the day as to the legal point of the question. Other speakers attempted to show that the meetings in Trafalgar Square were not only a cause of much interruption of business, but were also a source of trouble and danger. I cannot say that those points have been touched upon by the hon. Member so as to in any way reverse the decision at which the House arrived on the occasion to which I have referred. I would point out that Trafalgar Square is very much altered in character from what it was a few years ago. In the petition which was laid before this House, signed by persons of all grades and positions, it was pointed out that during the last few years Trafalgar Square had become one of the main arteries of the Metropolis, a point at which traffic converged from north, south, east, and west, and that any interruption of that traffic would cause most serious inconvenience. It has also been pointed out, although the point has been made very light of by the hon. Member, that the riot which took place on a certain date opened the eyes of a good many people to the danger which arose from those meetings. I am not going to blame those who convened the meetings. I am perfectly certain that those gentlemen, when they convened the meeting in Trafalgar Square, had no idea that any danger would result from it; but events proved most clearly that those who gathered the people together had no control whatever over them, and that in itself shows that these meetings are a source of considerable danger to life and property in the neighbourhood of Trafalgar Square. It is a very different thing from holding a meeting in a place or passing through a place with permission to hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square, and occasionally having language used which is calculated to inflame those who hear it, and which, perhaps, the promoters are very sorry for afterwards. The case of the Lord Mayor's Show is a very different thing; it occupies only a certain time in passing; the police have the conduct of it, and they take care that no interruption shall take place except what cannot be avoided. If I recollect aright, there is no necessity for the introduction of a Bill, because it has been clearly shown

that the regulation of Trafalgar Square rests with the Home Secretary, and, under his direction, with the Metropolitan Police. The mere fact of the hon. Member mentioning such a Bill—although he says he would oppose it by every means in his power—shows that there is lurking in his mind the possibility that Trafalgar Square may not have attached to it the right of public meeting for which he contends. He says that Trafalgar Square, being in the heart of a great city, is a suitable place of meeting. Well, within a mile is Hyde Park, where any number of meetings may be held without danger to life, limb, or property. Another point to which I want to draw attention is that the petition presented to the House was numerously signed by working men living in the neighbourhood. They were perfectly well aware how they were damaged by the meetings; and I am perfectly convinced that if the hon. Member polled his constituency he would find that the respectable and steady portion of the working classes are against any such meetings, while "professional" men, who attend all such meetings and processions, are in favour of them, not caring much what injury results to their fellow-men.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: I have the honour to represent a community largely composed of the working classes, and I have discussed this matter with them at more than one meeting. There was a strong feeling on the subject, though I admit there were degrees and shades of opinion on it. There is a section who desire to have the right of holding any meeting with or without notice upon any subject, at any time of the day, and on every day in the week. I do not think that is a very large class; but there is a largely preponderating class in my constituency who seriously complain that the accustomed right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square exercised for 40 years has been unconstitutionally invaded, not by the action of Parliament, but by the will of a police officer in high authority. The tendency of the argument I have addressed to more than one meeting was this—believing as I do that the interference of the Commissioner of Police was not authorized by any statute, I had urged upon the Government either to withdraw the interference, or that they should deal with the subject, as I have pressed upon the Home Secretary before, by legislative enactment. What are the facts of the case? It is truly said that for 40 years there has been this accustomed right of public meeting. I do not wish to be misunderstood. I do not assert that it is a legal right in itself in the same sense as a private legal right which is enforceable by action at law, but I do say it is a Constitutional right on the part of the community in the midst of which this vacant space exists, and which cannot be properly described as a thoroughfare at all, but is distinctly an open space as the Act describes it, capable of being appropriately used for some meetings—certainly for meetings of moderate dimensions. The test of a Constitutional right of this kind is whether it is a crime to hold orderly and peaceable meetings in Trafalgar Square. I ask this question with a view to obtaining an answer. If it be an offence, what is the Statute creating the offence, and what is the penalty annexed to the offence? If the allegation is that it is an offence, and if that is the advice the Home Secretary has given will the Home Secretary assist in raising in a Court of Law purely and simply that question? Is it a legal offence to hold an orderly and peaceable meeting in Trafalgar Square. With one exception nothing that could be called a serious disturbance has ever taken place as far as I am aware in connection with meetings in Trafalgar Square. I do not doubt that these meetings, or some of them, have been a cause of considerable inconvenience to some or many of the people living in the neighbourhood, but I want to know what great congregation of the people in public meeting could take place anywhere, or what great function in which a multitude of the people take part can be performed without causing inconvenience to some section of the community, but inconveniences which that section of the community must bear as they are caused by the exercise of a great Constitutional and important public right? The hon. Member for Reading has said fairly enough that the disturbance which took place was not one which could in any way be in contemplation of those who convened the meeting in February, 1886. A disorderly fringe became attached to the meeting itself, and it was a disorderly sec-

tion which became mischievous. Why? For the simple reason that the police, whose proper function was to be in attendance upon and to safeguard such meetings instead of being in Pall Mall in the rear of the gathering, where they were directed to take their position, were in the Mall. And then came the meeting in November which was convened after notice to the Home Secretary, and after a discussion with him on the part of a different set of persons who were responsible for having called and peaceably conducted many prior meetings in the same place. It was then that those extraordinary communications took place with the Home Secretary, showing that he was not then viewing the question in the same way as now, when, in answer this evening to the hon. Member for Camborne (Mr. Conybeare), he said there was clear statutory authority for what the police did in this matter. It is a noticeable fact that when the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, taking, as I believe, a serious and also a right view of the view of the matter, declared that it was no part of the intention of the Government to interfere with what he called a *bona fide* public meeting.

*THE HOME SECRETARY: I have contradicted that statement two or three times in the House.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: I did not recollect that the right hon. Gentleman had contradicted it, and I am sorry he has done so, because I thought the sentiment was one for which he might take credit; but now, on the contrary, I understand that the Home Secretary meant to say that the Government do claim the right to interfere with a *bonâ fide* political meeting, peaceable and orderly, if held in Trafalgar Square. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will presently explain what it was he did mean. Well, then came the prosecution at the Old Bailey, and, but for the verdict of the jury which determined that the meeting proposed to be held in November, and which was held, was an illegal meeting, I submit that the Government would be without a rag of justification for their conduct in the matter. I have not the materials before me on which to express an opinion on the right or wrong of that verdict. One is accustomed to accept the verdicts of juries as being founded on facts, unless there is some reason to suppose that something has prejudiced and distorted their judgment. But what does it amount to? It amounts to this only, that in the case of a particular meeting the Executive were justified in interfering to prevent it, on the ground that the circumstances under which it was proposed to be held it would be a source of alarm or terror to certain persons. Now, this would equally apply whatever meeting was held—it would equally apply to a meeting proposed to be held on enclosed private ground or in any other place whatever. Therefore I say it is apart from the question of customary user by the public of Trafalgar Square as a place of meeting, and what we complain of is this: that instead of limiting the interference which the verdict justified to the particular meeting, or to an illegal meeting the Government maintained and adopted the action of the Chief Commissioner of Police, who has issued a peremptory and perpetual mandate forbidding all meetings, of all kinds, irrespective of object or numbers, or whether they are orderly or not, in Trafalgar Square; and until he chooses to withdraw that mandate, he intends to prevent any meetings being held there. Now, I say that that is not law. The Proclamation of the Chief Commissioner is a notice and nothing more. It is authorized by no Statute, and cannot affect the character of any meeting. I speak with all deference to the opinions of those who differ from me honestly; and if there be on the Bench opposite learned Friends of mine who differ from this view, I think they will do me the justice of admitting—as I would do them the like justice—that I am stating here to-day what I stated in November last; and I say that what I state I believe is the law, and that if there is this difference it constitutes the greater reason and makes the argument all the stronger that the Government ought to lend themselves to the effort at raising and deciding this question directly, straightly, and simply. I ask the Government to recall the points I made in relation to the case of Saunders and the subsequent case before Mr. Vaughan. In the case of Saunders, who was formerly a Member of this House whilst that Gentleman was proceeding to address a

meeting at Trafalgar Square, a policeman came to him and committed a technical assault by putting his hand on his collar, and then required him to follow him to the Bow Street Police Station, where a charge was entered against Mr. Saunders. On this, Mr. Saunders was bailed out, and afterwards, when he appeared to answer the charge, the Government were represented by one of the most able criminal lawyers of the day (my friend Mr. Poland). What did Mr. Poland do? He could not formulate a charge against Mr. Saunders—he did not attempt to formulate a charge against him; but he begged to withdraw the charge, and, in point of fact, his statement was that this Proclamation was s Proclamation of the Chief Commissioner of Police in error. I hear someone say it was not a summary case: then why did they not indict Mr. Saunders? Here was a grave question which affected the minds of a considerable number of the community, and the Government had the opportunity of raising the question, and what mattered it whether it was a summary offence or not? Mr. Saunders begged that the Government would indict him, but instead of doing that Mr. Poland practically asked that the charge might be struck out, and that Mr. Saunders might take his departure for the purpose of bringing an action against the policeman and the Chief Commissioner, under whose authority the policeman acted, for trespass. And what was the course that the Government took? I do not understand it, for I do not understand what the justification for it was. Mr. Saunders brought his action and claimed damages merely for the purpose of raising the question. The Government pleaded, among other defences, that the action was not brought timeously, and that the notice of action which the Statute required had not been given. I ask why the Government did not meet the case fairly? It would have been the means, in a legitimate and peaceful way, of helping to solve the question. But that is not all. A subsequent case arose, and Mr. Vaughan was required to state a case for the opinion of the Superior Court. I desire to speak of Mr. Vaughan, as I do of all Judges whose conduct I may have occasion to criticize, with all respect; but the case as stated by Mr. Vaughan, so far as raising the question was concerned, was an utter and absolute farce. The question which he propounded for the opinion of the Superior Court was whether a meeting, consisting of a large number of persons, assembled together in Trafalgar Square under such circumstances as to inspire terror, but in an alleged exercise of a legal right, was a legal meeting. It is enough to say that the form in which the case was stated amounted to a compendious statement of what constitutes an illegal meeting. The Home Secretary has said, in answer to my hon. Friend the member for Camborne (Mr. Conybeare), that the proclamation of the Commissioner still stood, and that there was express statutory authority for it. I would press the right hon. Gentleman to state before the debate closes what that statutory authority is. I am not aware of any statutory authority unless it be contained in the 2 and 3 Vict., c. 47, and particularly sections 52, 53, and 54. I want to know whether the Home Secretary was advised that under those or any other sections there was power given to the Chief Commissioner to forbid access to Trafalgar Square, and the presence of numbers of persons in Trafalgar Square; and I want to know whether the right hon. Gentleman claims the same powers in the Chief Commissioner as regards any other thoroughfare or any other open space in the Metropolis? If the right hon. Gentleman does not, on what distinction does he base the authority in the one case over the other? The right hon. Gentleman said something about obstructing or disturbing the thoroughfare. Let me test that. Was it not notorious to all who know the conformation of Trafalgar Square, that although there is to a certain extent a thoroughfare which is in no real sense a thoroughfare in the sense of leading conveniently or directly to or from certain definite points, yet within the crossing lines in Trafalgar Square there is an open space. Does the Home Secretary urge that, even assuming there was an obstruction of a thoroughfare, that that constituted an illegal meeting, or authorized the Chief Commissioner and the police to put it down by force on the ground that the persons attending the meeting were at the moment obstructing the thoroughfare? I do not desire to em-

barrass the Government on this question. I urge this consideration because of two things—first, that there has been, as I contend, an unjustifiable interference in an unjustifiable fashion with an accustomed right; and, secondly, that the continued interference with that right by the Chief Commissioner, who claims authority to interfere, not with particular meetings which may be illegal assemblies, but with all assemblies of persons, however peaceable, is, I believe, undoubtedly creating a bad feeling between the people and the police, and no good subject would desire to see that feeling continue.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I concur with the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down in deploring very much any interference with the working classes which may tend to produce a feeling of dissatisfaction with regard to the action of the Executive. I agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman that that is a matter very much to be deplored and, if possible, to be avoided; but it is not to be avoided by allowing what is wrong and unlawful. I am bound to say that those people are responsible for causing that feeling, as far as it deserves any attention at all, who, like the hon. Mover of the Amendment, din into the ears of the working classes that they have a right of meeting in these places. The hon. and learned Gentleman, with his great legal reputation as an accurate lawyer, has lent weight to that idea not by saying that this is a right which could be enforced in an action, but by talking about the accustomed right of meeting in Trafalgar Square or in any other place. I protest against the use of loose language such as that, seeing that the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman will be read with avidity by the working classes of the Metropolis to-morrow. The hon. and learned Gentleman knows very well that there is no such right as a right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square—not a right that can be enforced in a Court of Law, or by any machinery known to the law. What is the use of raising quibbling complaints about the case of Mr. Saunders. There might have been 20 opportunities of bringing an action if it were at all true to say that the public had a right, in any strict and proper sense, of meeting in the Square. If that they were so, anyone who obstructed a person in the exercise of that right would be liable to an action at the suit of the person obstructed, and nothing would be simpler than to bring an action in which the question of right could be raised. No lawyer can assert that there exists a right of meeting on the part of any of Her Majesty's subjects either in Trafalgar Square or in any other public thoroughfare. It is a right totally unknown to the law, and cannot be established by custom, however prolonged. The fact is that the spirit of forbearance, which, happily, always characterizes the action of the authorities in this country, has winked at the use of Trafalgar Square for public meetings so long as it was not dangerous. If those meetings had continued peaceable and orderly, the present Government, like those which preceded it, would not have thought of interfering. In all probability the same acquiescence would have gone on. I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to believe that, so far as the Government are concerned, they have every sympathy with public meetings. [An hon. MEMBER: Then why not allow the meetings?] Do hon. Members opposite for a moment suggest that any Executive Government could ignore the results of the experience of 1886? The acquiescence of which I have spoken has been twice most grossly abused. Will anyone stand up and say that it is tolerable that such scenes as those of February 1886 should be allowed to recur in London,—the richest, the most orderly, and the most law-abiding city in the world? Who was responsible for those scenes? Do not let it be supposed for a moment that I charge the originators of the meetings in 1886 with direct and personal responsibility for what happened; but indirectly they were responsible, because they gave a plausible excuse and a decent occasion for the roughs of London to gather together, and then, when the meetings had taken place, to proceed in different directions from Trafalgar Square to plunder shops and commit other outrages. The organizers of the meetings, however good their intentions might have been, and however much they may have sincerely desired to avoid confusion and disorder, could not control large masses of people, and when once they were got together in a thoroughfare which was not a manœuv-

ring ground the task of following them up and preventing disorder was very difficult. The lesson taught by the events of November, 1887, was equally fruitful, and must have been laid to heart by anybody who was responsible for the order of London. I do not want to go over the melancholy story again. The blame I have always taken to myself was that I waited too long. So reluctant was I to do anything which would seem to be an interference with the liberty of meeting that I believe I waited longer than I ought before taking action. The warnings, certainly, were very frequent. At last it became irresistibly clear that these meetings were dangerous to the public peace. It was only by enormous exertion that the police, from day to day were able to preserve the property—I was going to say the lives—but certainly the property, of the orderly inhabitants of this city. The strain upon the police force was something prodigious; and thousands of men had to watch day after day. The strain upon their temper was great; and this state of things also meant increased expense for the ratepayers. It was a state of things which was intolerable, and we should have neglected our first duty if we had not taken steps to prevent it from continuing. It is a fact that a number of people unacquainted with the law have been taught by those in authority to suppose that their rights were being infringed; and it was this which caused so much irritation and anger. Such anger would be justifiable if it were true that the people had rights which were being infringed. I think, therefore, that words such as I have referred to should be cautiously used by men of great authority, because they mislead the people. The hon. and learned Gentleman has asked me where is the statutable authority for the action of the Police Commissioner with regard to the proclamation of November 18. The statutable authority is that referred to in the notice itself—namely, the Metropolitan Police Acts, 2 and 3 Vic., c. 47 and 71.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: Read the section.

*MR. MATTHEWS: I read the section scores of times before the notice was issued; and I can only repeat that I still rely upon the advice given me, which I believe to be well founded, that the section does give the Chief Commissioner of Police ample power in order to prevent obstruction and tumult in Trafalgar Square. The objection constantly made on the other side is, "Why not give us the opportunity of raising this point in a Court of Law?" I repeat that it is in the power of anybody who chooses to assert this right of meeting, if he is obstructed to bring the matter before a Court of Law. If he is right, and is obstructed, there is nothing in the world to prevent him from bringing an action.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman state any place where the legal right to hold public meetings could be raised in the way he suggests?

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Is the right hon. Gentleman inviting the people to hold further meetings?

*MR. MATTHEWS: What I say is this. Those who assert that there exists a legal right to meet can test the truth and validity of the matter by bringing an action. If they rely upon their right, and have confidence in it, they ought to prove it by bringing an action against anybody who obstructs them in the assertion of their right. I confess that I am quite content with the decisions already obtained. The law on the subject has been laid down by Mr. Justice Charles in the case of "The Queen against Cuninghame Graham," and by Mr. Justice Wills and Mr. Justice Grantham in the case "*Ex parte* Lewis." In these cases the Judges distinctly laid it down that there was no right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: Is there any right anywhere in that sense?

*MR. MATTHEWS: Yes.

*SIR C. RUSSELL: Where?

*MR. MATTHEWS: There is a right of public meeting on any ground the consent of the owner of which can be obtained for the holding of the meeting. There is a right of public meeting in London in the parks. The inhabitants of London are in a position of singular advantage in this respect. They are the only community in England who have four places—one in the north, one in the south, one in the east, and one in the west—expressly provided for them by Parliament where they can meet with a legal right to hold a meeting. No other communities have such a right, and if they do hold meetings they have to rely upon that sort of acqui-

escence on the part of their fellow-citizens and of the authorities which existed for a long time in London before the disturbances of 1886 and 1887 rendered it impossible to remain neutral any longer. I believe that hon. Members below the Gangway opposite who represent Ireland will bear me out when I say that public meetings in that country are usually held on private land.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh): I rise to reply to the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. MATTHEWS: It is scarcely worth while to pursue the subject.

MR. W. REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman asked a question. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

*MR. MATTHEWS: I would press upon the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite what the consequences of the converse proposition might be. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not assert, but he suggested by the language he used, that there might be such a thing as the right to hold a public meeting in a thoroughfare; and he spoke of the accustomed right of meeting. No doubt in Dod Street it has been the custom to hold public meetings on Sundays; and in certain streets in the Seven Dials small meetings have been held for years both on week days and Sundays. But can anybody with a grave face tell the House of Commons, let alone a Court of Law, that these meetings are held by any right? The truth is that this suggested right is a thing contradictory of and absolutely inconsistent with the purposes for which the thoroughfares were created. If they are to be monopolized by people standing about in crowds, the subjects of the Queen will not be able to pass through them; therefore I assert with some confidence that nowhere is there such a right of meeting in the thoroughfares as has been suggested, although London is singularly fortunate in having, through the care of Parliament, been provided with four places in which meetings can be held. I do—I must venture to appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite not to goad their followers, who naturally do not know what the law is, into the idea that some wrong has been done to them in connection with the supposed right of meeting in Trafalgar Square. Is it reasonable, or is it good citizenship—I will put it even as high as that—to goad your followers into the idea that some right of theirs has been arbitrarily interfered with by the police or by the Government? On the contrary, I say that it is most unreasonable to so act in the face of the legal authorities which exist. The hon. and learned Member for Camborne asks what are those legal authorities? I should have thought that even his mind would by this time be penetrated with the knowledge of the decisions given on this subject by learned Judges. There is the summing up of Mr. Justice Charles in the case of Graham and Burns; there is also a decision in the case of "*Ex parte* Dillon Lewis," and surely before an hon. Member takes it upon himself to tell ignorant people that the Judges are wrong, it behoves him to get a decision from some other and better authority, and until he has done that it is his duty as a reasonable man to accept the law as it has been interpreted by the Judges. Complaint has been made because a perfectly legal course taken with Mr. Saunders' case prevented a decision being come to on the point. That was not my fault, for I expressed my desire that this very point as to the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square should be expressly raised in this case. I agree that the case stated by Mr. Vaughan does not, as it stands, raise the right of public meeting in the way which alone will satisfy hon. Members opposite; but, nevertheless, Mr. Vaughan expressly declared that

> "He was of opinion that there was and is no right on the part of the public to occupy Trafalgar Square for the purpose of holding meetings there."

I should have thought that so broad an expression of opinion on the part of Mr. Vaughan would, at any rate, have opened the door to getting of the Court to express some view on that subject had hon. Members opposite thought fit. I most distinctly claim on behalf of the police that under the Metropolitan Police Acts they have the right, whenever public disorder and obstruction in the streets are likely to be the consequence of a meeting, to prevent such meeting. If the Metropolitan Police Acts do not authorize the exercise of such power, they ought instantly to be amended so as to give the power. It

would be intolerable, in a city containing five millions of inhabitants, if that were not the law and the legal authority of the Chief of the Police. But hon. Members say, "Our meetings are to be perfectly orderly and peaceable." Well, those are fair words and fair promises constantly made, and no doubt in good faith; but the experience of 1887 shows that those intentions and hopes were disappointed, and the results were such as, no doubt, the hon. Member did not contemplate but deplored.

MR. GRAHAM: The meeting would have been orderly, only you broke it up.

*MR. MATTHEWS: It does not do always to rely on good intentions, and I must claim on behalf of the police that the deplorable result was due to persons who took advantage of what the hon. Member was doing to create disorder. They may not have been his followers, or possibly his followers may have become too enthusiastic and warm to care about the consequences of their act. Experience has shown those responsible for public order in large towns that it is a dangerous thing to congregate large masses of people where, in consequence of the many streets around, they cannot easily be followed by the police, because, if not followed, they may do irreparable mischief, such as was committed in February, 1886. It is clear that if once it became known that a space in the vicinity of crowded and business parts of London is becoming a regular place of meeting, the vultures — the birds of prey of society—will flock there too. I apologize to the House for having occupied its time so long, but I wish to impress on hon. Gentlemen opposite that there have been no steps of hostility taken towards the promoters and organizers of public meetings; on the contrary, whenever a public meeting has been held in the parks, the authorities have done their utmost to protect those going to the meeting, even to the extent of seriously inconveniencing the street traffic. Orders have always been issued to the police ever since I have been at the Home Office—perhaps I have even carried it to excess—that they should do everything they can to facilitate the progress of a procession and open a way as easily as possible to the park, where the law allows meetings to be held. I appeal to those who have really the interests at heart, not merely of any section holding strong political opinions, but of the whole London public, not to encourage the idea that the streets of London ever can be a proper place for public meetings.

*MR. W. R. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I have listened with the utmost interest, and no little surprise, to the speech just delivered by the right hon. Gentleman. So far from being guilty, as the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary accuses us, of hounding on the people of the Metropolis to break the law, and of seeking to bring them into collision with the Government, we Radical Members who represent Metropolitan constituencies have in no small degree risked our own popularity by setting ourselves determinedly against action. But I accuse the right hon. Gentleman of having himself been the chief cause of the breaking of the peace in the Metropolis, while those for whom I speak have been the real champions of law and order in this matter, and the right hon. Gentleman ought to thank us, on behalf of the Government, for being its most valuable auxiliaries in the preservation of the peace. I and those who act with me are anxious that the question should be settled in a pacific manner. The Home Secretary seems by his language to be inviting us to enter the arena; but we are not going to fall into a trap by bringing ourselves into collision with the Government. Twenty-two or 23 years ago I happened to be one of the active participators in the efforts then being made to establish for the people the right of public meeting. I know the risks which at that time some of us ran, not merely of losing our liberty, but even our lives, because the Government of the day sent thousands of troops into the park who were prepared if occasion required it—and they even sought to establish the occasion—to fire upon the people. Well, if the same necessity existed to-day, some of us would be prepared to run the same risks. But we are anxious that the question should be settled in a peaceable manner. However, as I said before, we are not going to fall into the cunning and skilfully baited trap which some have prepared in order to bring us into collision with the police. No doubt the Government would be exceedingly obliged to us if we would do

something to divert the attention of our countrymen just now from their conduct in Ireland; they would be glad, in fact, to pose as the champions of law and order in London, because it would afford them an opportunity of rehabilitating their somewhat tarnished reputation. But we are not going to do it. We will wait, if necessary, for a change of Government, for I presume the Members of the present Government do not imagine that they will eternally occupy their comfortable places on the Treasury Bench. Up to the time when the Home Secretary issued his ukase the right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square had been enjoyed uninterruptedly for 40 years; and 22 years ago, at the time when the right of meetings in Hyde Park was in dispute, the Government of the day insisted that Trafalgar Square was the proper place for public meetings, and that the parks were most improper places. Well, under the impression that we still enjoyed the rights which the Government of that day admitted we possessed, the people eighteen months ago announced a meeting in the Square, and it was rather strange that the first meeting which the Government prohibited was one convened by working men to protest against the Irish policy of Her Majesty's Government. It is singular they should have selected a meeting of that character as an occasion for striking a deadly blow against the right of public meeting in the Metropolis. The right hon. Gentleman seeks now to justify his action on the ground that 12 months previously there had been a meeting in Trafalgar Square at which serious disturbances had taken place, when shops were pillaged and property destroyed. Because that meeting produced such terrible results, he seeks to justify his action in prohibiting meetings in Trafalgar Square for all time. Now, Sir, it would be interesting to know the history of that meeting at which the disturbances took place. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh was Home Secretary some of us asserted—and I repeat the charge here to-day—that that meeting was promoted for the purpose of bringing discredit upon the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. The money in connection with the meeting came from a mysterious source. We asked for a Commission of Inquiry, so as to ascertain who were the instigators of the mischief, but it was refused. I say that if the police had not neglected their duties on that occasion no trouble would have arisen; for the same dangerous element that caused those riots is always present at every Lord Mayor's Show or Royal procession. The Home Secretary has declared that the meetings in Trafalgar Square were prohibited because of the disturbance to the traffic which they caused; and that the Government are most anxious to safeguard the right of public meeting. In order to test the good faith of this statement, I suggested to the Home Secretary that the Horse Guards Parade, where there is no traffic at all, should be granted as an alternative site for meetings. After three months' deliberation the suggestion has been rejected. I admit that I made the suggestion merely with the idea of putting the Home Secretary in a corner, and of testing whether the Government are really anxious about disturbance to the traffic, or whether they wish to put down the free expression of opinion on the part of the masses of the people, for I had a suspicion that he was not as sincere in his determination to preserve inviolate the right of public meeting as we are. He refuses to grant us the use of the Horse Guards Parade, because it is surrounded by the residences of wealthy people and because it is in the centre of Government Offices which must be safeguarded. But the grounds for that refusal are an unwarrantable reflection upon the working men of London, who would, if necessary, help to safeguard the residences and offices, and we are quite as desirous as they are that they shall be properly protected. Now, therefore, we know exactly where we are; it is not the use of Trafalgar Square, but it is the right of public meeting that the right hon. Gentleman objects to. The Government have a large mechanical majority in the House. They will defeat us to-night, but, as sure as we are here, the time will come when we shall succeed in establishing the right of the people to meet in our open spaces, subject—as we have always asked the meetings should be subject—to proper regulations by the responsible authorities of the day. Thirty years

ago there sat on the Throne of France a Monarch who considered he was equally entitled to do what the right hon. Gentleman has done in respect to public meeting on the part of the people over whom for the time he ruled. He prohibited a few public meetings, but it was in pursuance of his intention and desire that he lost his Throne. Let Her Majesty's Government see to it that the same disastrous result does not follow the policy they are now pursuing.

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to interfere in this debate, as I thought that outside this House was the better place to move in this matter; but I rise for two reasons—firstly, to justify myself from a cowardly and insinuating attack levelled against me by a paper purporting to be a Liberal paper—the *Daily News*—this afternoon; and, secondly, in order to state that I differ in some respects from the Mover of this Amendment. I do not quite deplore the absence from Her Majesty's gracious Speech of any reference to proposals of legislation with regard to Trafalgar Square. I do not assert that it would be possible at all times and in every circumstance to hold meetings in Trafalgar Square. No sane man would propose to summon a meeting in the small hours of the morning or a meeting by torchlight without asking police protection, and giving the greatest pledges for the safety of the surrounding property. But I particularly wish to point out that great and undue importance has been attached to the mere legal side of the question, and that the popular side has been altogether forgotten. It cannot be supposed that those who now tramp the streets of London in search of employment understand the niceties of debate in Parliament, conducted solely on the legal aspect of such an important question as this. If you polled the working men's clubs in London to-night, you would find, irrespective of all that has been said on both sides of the House, that there is a feeling in the majority of these men's hearts that a hardship has been inflicted on them with regard to meeting in Trafalgar Square. I assert that in this matter I have the poor people of London at my back; otherwise it would have been impossible for me, almost single-handed, to have conducted this agitation to the point at which it has now arrived, and to have been able to stand to-day in a vastly changed position from that which I occupied 13 months ago. There sit on the Ministerial side of the House many representatives of the nobility and aristocracy of the nation. There is an ancient and obsolete phrase that *noblesse oblige*. But how was it that, when speaking on this question 13 months ago, hon. Members so far forgot that antiquated adage as to treat in the way they did a man whom they knew had been severely injured in the Trafalgar Square meeting, and who had had the opportunity of recuperating his strength by the salutary and palatable diet extended to prisoners in Her Majesty's prisons? I venture to say that from the most violent working men hon. Gentlemen opposite would not, under the circumstances in which I stood—without ten men on my own side to back me up, and without the command of my voice—have received the unworthy treatment I received from those who should remember that *noblesse oblige*. Let me recur to the treatment I received from hon. Members on this side of the House, because in matters of popular rights I do not place one atom more confidence in the front Opposition bench than I do in the Conservative front bench. Was there one hon. Member, still less one right hon. Gentleman, who spoke one word in defence of popular rights before my trial? Was there one Liberal newspaper that gave one word of help on that occasion? There was a knot of earnest Liberals, a knot of Irish Members, sitting beside me when I addressed the House who did extend to me their support; but had you not yourself, Sir, with that fairness which has ever characterized you when popular rights are being discussed, obtained a hearing for me, I fancy that the House of Commons, the Representatives of the British nation, the House which exists for the benefit of the poor of this country, would have refused me the opportunity of justifying my action in standing up for popular rights when they were attacked. Now, too much importance has been attached to the fact that two meetings convened in Trafalgar Square resulted in unfortunate occurrences. I deny that such a thing as a monster meeting in proportion to the population has been held in London

since the meeting convened by Ernest Jones on Kennington Common. The population of the Metropolis is 5,000,000, but the largest public meetings have seldom or ever attained 80,000 or 100,000 men. If the people of London met on the same scale as the citizens of Dublin the numbers would be 200,000 or 250,000; and if such a gathering took place I submit to Her Majesty's Government that it would be impossible to dragoon the people of London out of what they consider to be a popular right. It is not the deprivation of the right which rankled in the hearts of the people; it is the broken heads, the curses, the bad usage to which men, their wives, and even their children have been subjected, not only at the meeting to which special reference has been made, but in the long course of meetings held during the past 15 months. It is absolutely idle to deny that public meeting in the abstract has not been interfered with. I challenge the Home Secretary to justify himself and his police for the action they took on Sunday in violently dispersing a meeting on the Thames Embankment, and afterwards in Hyde Park. If that does not constitute an attack on the right of public meeting, I should like to know what does. There is an aspect of the question on which I should like to touch before I conclude. The hon. Gentleman who immediately preceded me (Mr. Cremer) took great credit to himself in having acted, together with his colleagues, in restraining the people of London during the last 18 months. He certainly did restrain; he acted as a drag upon the people; and a proposition that fell from him exceedingly amused me. He advanced the somewhat astonishing theory that the men who assembled on the Horse Guards Parade in no wise envied the wealth of their richer fellow-citizens. I suppose that, speaking as a working man, he considered that the wealth that he and his colleagues create should be for ever absolutely at the disposal of those classes to which he referred. But to return to the subject more directly before us, let me ask if hon. Members think that the action of the hon. and learned Member for Hackney (Sir C. Russell) was dictated out of pure goodness of heart and from a wish to uphold the right of public meeting that he has not hitherto shown much alacrity in defending? I rather think that certain meetings that have been recently held in the Metropolis, and especially a certain passage of arms between the hon. and learned Gentleman and myself, in which I have been able to rout the hon. and learned Gentleman, horse, foot, and artillery, is the cause which has brought him upon his legs in the House this afternoon. I remember the time when the hon. and learned Gentleman brought all the heavy artillery of his legal logic to bear against Mr. Hyndman, Mr. Champion, and others, who defended themselves, and when, by every artifice of the law, and with all the power of the Government of the day at his back, he sought to obtain a conviction against those men. Because a few panes of glass were broken and a few geese and turkeys were stolen by starving men on one occasion in 1886, when London, through the negligence of the Government, was undoubtedly in the possession of the mob for several hours, that afforded no just ground for suppressing the meeting in Trafalgar Square in which I had the honour to take part. I remember a certain speech made by the noble Lord the Member for West Birmingham. [*Laughter.*] I am reminded that my description "noble Lord" is a little premature; but the right Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), after his return from his negotiation of an unsuccessful Fisheries Treaty, said that if such a meeting as that in Trafalgar Square had been held in America, it would have been dispersed *vi et armis*. No doubt that might be so, for in America the plutocrats are powerful. I had intended to address a most earnest appeal to the right hon. Gentleman for Mid Lothian had he remained in his place. I had intended to invite the right hon. Gentleman to stand up in the House and say a word for us on this London question. In a speech which that right hon. Gentleman made in Nottingham only six weeks before the meeting in Trafalgar Square, he said that if the English democracy did not take matters in regard to Ireland in hand the same state of affairs would arise here in London. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the same state of things did not arise in London November 13, and why it was that his

Michelstown gun was, so to speak, spiked? Why was all the eloquence which the right hon. Gentleman bestowed on the democracy nullified? Because the people of this country saw that he was not acting on principle, but from political bias. I do not wish to say one discourteous word of the right hon. Gentleman; but I think that the great popular cause which is at stake is far more important than the feelings of one man, however eminent he may be. Now, I have to justify myself against an attack which I characterize as cowardly. The *Daily News* to-day, in a leading article directed to certain meetings that have recently been held in in the Metropolis, advised the people of London to confide themselves to the careful and caatious counsels given to them by their own Members rather than to follow the rash advice given them by such men as Messrs. Graham and Conybeare. [*Laughter.*] That may seem a legitimate subject of laughter, but I ask any hon. Member where he has heard of me giving advice that was either inflammatory or in the least intended to provoke a breach of the peace? I have, on the contrary, in season and out of season, stood forward to restrain them; and I will be no party to push unarmed men forward to be decimated, perhaps, by grape shot. Whatever Government are in power, if a collision occurs with the police, and people are again killed by the police, the plutocrats and aristocrats, who alone hold the power in this country, will bear them out in any acts of barbarity they may commit, and those who like myself stand up in the House of Commons and ask for vengeance for the blood that has been shed will be howled down by the one Party in the House and deserted by the other.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury E.): I am not going to arrogate to myself the enormous power over the working classes of the Metropolis which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cuninghame Graham) does although I must say, that for a number of years I have received some exhibitions of their confidence. I think that if the hon. Member for North-West Lanarkshire wanted to be fair, he should have mentioned that one of the ablest speeches in defence of the right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square was made by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney, over twelve months ago, when he brought forward a Motion on the subject. And personally I am glad to recognize the sincerity of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, although the last speaker has thought himself entitled to call it in question. But let me bring the discussion back to the Amendment before the House. I think the speech of the Home Secretary was one of the most unhappy that we could possibly have had delivered on this question. We have had learned Gentlemen differing this afternoon as to what is the proper construction of the Police Regulation Act, but, after all, we have to advance this question a stage beyond that point. The proposition laid down by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green requires to be answered by the representative of the Ministry who next speaks; you should declare by Statute that meetings in Trafalgar Square are either distinctly illegal or perfectly legal. We should then know where we are. If it should be decided that such meetings are not legal, the people of London could agitate to obtain a statutory right to meet in Trafalgar Square similar to that which they now enjoy in regard to Hyde Park. Now let me say that we cannot properly compare the meetings of 1886 with that of November, 1887, because there is a fundamental difference between them. The unfortunate circumstances which arose out of the meetings in 1886 arose after the speakers had begun to separate, in fact, after the meeting was supposed to be over. Then came that exodus from the Square, which would not have had the unfortunate consequences which attended it if the police had done their duty. But the conditions of 1887 were quite different; the people were not allowed to approach the Square for the purpose of holding their meeting, their processions were met a distance from the Square, at Bloomsbury on one side, at Westminster Bridge on the other. It was at a distance from the announced place of meeting that the police set upon the people,

and an unfortunate collision, for which the police are responsible, took place. So you have no right to say that any riot was the outcome of the meeting called for November 13, 1887. You never allowed the people to assemble; you met the people's processions at considerable distance from the Square with a considerable force of police, and with undoubted military strategy, for which Sir Charles Warren can have all the credit he deserves; you dispersed bodies of unarmed citizens while proceeding to the exercise of their accustomed right, under leaders accustomed to address such meetings in the place proposed. I will not accuse the Home Secretary of equivocation; but there is something very much like equivocation in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He seems to think that after a considerable period of user of the Square for meetings you can satisfy the people that the user is gone because the Chief Commissioner issued a proclamation or notice denying that right. But that will not satisfy the people. Suppose the whole of your argument is good, that Trafalgar Square is not a good place for meetings; for the sake of argument I yield all you demand upon that point; you must not suppose that the people are going to allow this privilege which they have used for a number of years to be taken away, simply on the *ipse dixit* of the Chief Commissioner of Police for the time being. If you want to take the privilege away, if your argument is good that the place is the most unsuitable in London for the purpose, then by all means follow out your opinion, but at the same time do have some little respect for something approaching Constitutionalism as we understand it in this country; take some other course than merely placarding the walls with the word of the Chief Commissioner for the time being. That mere action is enough to irritate any population, even supposing you are right in your opinion. I desire, in common with the other Liberal Metropolitan Members, to use whatever influence we have to induce the people to wait and fight out this question on Constitutional lines, but we have received no assistance in that endeavour from Her Majesty's Government. It is all very well for the Home Secretary to quibble over the case of Mr. Saunders. It was the best case we had, because the question of riot was in no way mixed up with it. In other and previous cases before the police courts, there were forcible attempts made to hold a meeting, but these arose entirely out of the case of Mr. Saunders, and therefore we thought it a good case upon which to raise the right of public meeting. Mr. Saunders entered the Square, began to speak, was arrested immediately, and went to the police station, and so arose a case favourable for a decision as to the legitimate right we claim of open-air public speaking in the Square. The Home Secretary says—"You can go to the Square, any of you who think we are wrong, and thereupon bring an action if you are interfered with." But how are we to raise such a case? I hope the Attorney General will address himself to this point. How are we who want the question settled peaceably, who wish to prevent anything like a collision between the authorities and the people—how are we to get a case upon which to challenge a judicial decision in the Courts? Suppose we call a meeting there to-morrow, immediately you take precautions to stop it, and if we have people around us whom we could not control, there would be a collision between them and the police; and then, again, the old question of riot and resisting the police comes forward. I do not profess to be a lawyer, and am looking at this as a layman merely. The Attorney General will admit, I think, that if you have the question of riot introduced, the point at once becomes complicated, and you cannot get that clear decision on the right of meeting which we desire to raise. I know of a case identically the same, in another part of the United Kingdom, when a friend of mine sought to raise the point we desire to raise, but I saw at once he had complicated his position by resisting the police in the execution of their duty; and, I suppose, the reason I escaped, was because I did not resist the police. I hope the Attorney General clearly understands we want this question settled in a peaceable manner; we are prepared to receive a judicial decision, but we are not prepared to take the people to Trafalgar Square, and allow you to use physical force against them, and then say that we had a lot of roughs and created disorder, when we induced a body of respectable persons to demonstrate their

position. It is a disgrace to London to see the way in which such large bodies of police are marched to public meetings. I presided the other day at a meeting on Clerkenwell Green, and somebody present counted the number of police on the ground. I have spoken often on Clerkenwell Green, and so have many of my friends near me—it is not, perhaps, the sort of thing Members opposite are in the habit of doing—still, acting within our right, we have done it. It was a cold night, about a fortnight ago, and there were enough police present to make in themselves a large meeting. Since 1887 this practice of drafting off bodies of police to attend public meetings has been going on. I first noticed it at a meeting I attended at Wood Green, one of the first of a series of meetings held to make public protest against the Coercion Act, and there quite an army of police were present, surrounding the doors of the assembly room where the meeting was held. Since then we have become used to the practice in London, and I suppose it will continue until we get rid of the present Government, "a consummation devoutly to be wished." That is the task we shall set ourselves, and the challenge taken up this evening will help us towards that desired end. Just a word in reference to the speech of the hon. Member for Reading. He spoke of a big petition signed largely by a number of workmen living in the neighbourhood of Trafalgar Square, and it would be instructive to hear where this large number of workmen live in the vicinity of Trafalgar Square. I will allow there are two blocks of model dwellings—though they are a considerable distance away—but elsewhere I do not know where you will find these working-class residents. I am not speaking of traders and persons of leisure. It seems to me very strange that to present this London petition recourse should be had to the hon. Member for the distant constituency of Reading, when hon. Members opposite are proud of reminding us that their Metropolitan representation is five times the strength of ours. Were there no colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to present this Petition against holding meetings in Trafalgar Square signed by working men of that neighbourhood? Possibly, if one of these hon. Members had done so, it would have provoked the expression of a strong counter feeling among his constituents. We have seen the defence of the Government action comes not from Metropolitan Conservative Members, but from the hon. Member for Reading. Is that because hon. Members knew there is a strong and determined feeling on the part of the superior minded working classes in the Metropolis to obtain back again for themselves the right of user of Trafalgar Square for public meetings? They know that large members of working men, while they are not prepared to place themselves in collision with the authorities, wish, by Constitutional means, to effect this purpose, and there is evidence that they will carry out their desire. The whole debate, so far as it has proceeded upon the other side, has been most discouraging to us; but if you think you will get rid of this question by simply telling us that certain clauses of the Police Regulation Act give the power of absorbing this use of the Square which has been enjoyed by the people for a long series of years, let me tell you, you entirely fail to satisfy us and a very large number of persons outside. We want to see, we hope to see, that question settled in a way satisfactory to everyone, and I am sure the only way of a reasonable compromise is that which we have offered again and again, that the right of meeting in the Square should be recognized, duly regulated, and under proper control, so that all who desire to legitimately use the Square for a meeting should have the opportunity of doing so. Even now, before this debate closes, it is not too late for Her Majesty's Government to say something of a conciliatory character on this question. I am sure it would be worth their while, even if they cannot agree with our offer. They might offer something which would be considered a little more conciliatory than anything we have had from them up to the present. The allusions to meetings in "Dod Street" and in "Seven Dials" have no relation to the case. Those are thoroughfares, and no one can for a moment say that "Seven Dials," where Temperance speakers and street preachers have set up their little stands, comes within the category of open

spaces, and is the sort of place to hold a big meeting. In Trafalgar Square you have quite different circumstances: it is an open space. Technically, it is a thoroughfare, but practically it is not so, and it is fully suited for the object for which it has been used in times gone by, and for which it will have to be used again. Her Majesty's Government must be prepared to hear of this Trafalgar Square question over and over again, so long as they keep their present position. We are determined, even if we lose the right of meeting there, that that right shall not be taken away from the people on a warrant or notice issued by the Chief Commissioner of Police for the time being. We are determined not to lose the right; and I ask the Government if they are disposed to offer us the opportunity of a settlement by the discussion of a Bill, or in a Constitutional manner? We shall continue to admonish the people to be patient, we shall educate the people—though they scarcely require that—to wait patiently for the time when the Government will have to give the opportunity for the expression of that displeasure at the Government's action in regard to Trafalgar Square, which the people will not hesitate to express.

*Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) rose to continue the debate.

An hon. Member called attention to the fact that there were not 40 Members present. The House was counted, and 40 Members were found to be present.

*Mr. HOWELL: It was not my intention to take part in this debate, and I do not think I should have done so, but for the amazing speeches of the Home Secretary and the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. C. Graham). I feel that my position in regard to this question is a somewhat peculiar one, and I am, therefore, compelled to trespass for a few moments upon the time of the House. In the first place, I defy any Member of the Government or any hon. Member on the Ministerial side of the House to point to anything in my past political career which can justify the assertion that I have ever promoted meetings in the open air which have led to disturbance or have been likely to cause disorder. But I have been concerned in some of the largest open air meetings which ever took place in this country, and they have been altogether free from anything like annoyance, riot, or disturbance. So far as the meetings in Trafalgar Square are concerned, I may inform hon. Members opposite that they have been witnessed with approval by most of the residents from the balconies and windows of their houses. I am by no means anxious that there should be any disturbance in Trafalgar Square at this moment—not that I am anxious that there ever should be, but I am specially anxious that under existing circumstances no disturbance should take place there. The speeches of the Home Secretary and the hon. Member for Lanarkshire seemed to me distinctly to invite a meeting in Trafalgar Square, in order that it may be put down.

*Mr. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: I do not think that the hon. Member is fairly construing my remarks. I think my remarks were calculated to invite people not to assemble in Trafalgar Square.

*Mr. HOWELL: I was obliged to put my own construction upon the words of the hon. Gentleman, and I considered that the whole tone of the speech invited a meeting, especially when it is taken in connection with that of the Home Secretary. I must say that the Home Secretary has taken up a peculiar position for a lawyer to take—namely, that the citizens of this country have no rights except those which are given to them by Statute. I do not profess to be a Constitutional lawyer, nor do I profess to be a lawyer at all; but I have dipped into some law books in my time, and I have endeavoured to find out what the rights and duties of a citizen are. It is a somewhat complicated subject; but, as far as I have been able to find out, I believe that a citizen is entitled to do whatever he is not prohibited from doing, either by Common Law or by Statute. The majority of the rights we enjoy as citizens are not rights which are laid down either by Statute Law or by Common Law, but are—although the phrase is often sneered at—the natural rights of every citizen. I shall be very much astonished if the Attorney General supports the statement of the Home Secretary that user does not give a right of meeting in a particular place. The right

of meeting in Trafalgar Square goes back certainly 40 years. A meeting there was proclaimed by a Conservative Government in 1866, but that proclamation was not enforced, and was practically withdrawn, as the proclamation was abandoned and the meeting was held. Under those circumstances, the working men were justified in believing they had a right to meet in Trafalgar Square; and, that being so, they ought to have been dealt with tenderly. Both the Home Office and Scotland Yard ought to have been careful how they disturbed such meetings. The position of the working men is strengthened by the fact mentioned by the hon. Member for Haggerston, that the meetings which preceded the one which was interfered with by the police were got up with money supplied by liberal-minded Members of the Conservative Party, who seem to have supplied both of the sections with money on that occasion. The natural consequence was disturbance and riot, and then came proclamations forbidding the holding of what had hitherto been regarded as perfectly legal, lawful, and peaceable meetings. Perhaps I may say that, although my name has been connected with the meeting which took place, in which Trafalgar Square was referred to the other night, and although I have been identified with meetings of the working classes in the Metropolis for more than 30 years, yet I never, under any circumstances, sanctioned by my presence or by my voice a meeting on a Sunday. Therefore I did not approve of the meeting which took place on that fatal Sunday; but I maintain that those men who went there, believing that they were acting legally, ought not to have been treated with violence by the right hon. Gentleman opposite who says he is as anxious as we are to protect the right of public meeting in the Metropolis. As regards the present position of the question, it is a difficult and complicated one. We have endeavoured to advise the peaceable working men of London not to attempt under the existing circumstances to hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square, lest there should be a conflict with the police. Yet we have been classed by the right hon. Gentleman with those who have hounded the people on to such meetings.

MR. MATTHEWS: No.

*MR. HOWELL: That was certainly the impression left on my mind. The Metropolitan Members have all prayed their friends to keep quiet under existing circumstances. We know that there are persons who hound the people to go into Trafalgar Square and hold meetings, and the only reason why a great demonstration is not called there is that they have not the pluck to go by themselves, but wait until some Metropolitan Liberal Member will head them. As far as we are concerned, however, we do not intend to place ourselves in the position of leading a mob to Trafalgar Square; we say, let those who want such an assemblage, or a conflict with the police, head such a procession; for my own part I wash my hands of it. But I must say that, if the Home Secretary's words meant anything at all, they were an invitation to the people to go to Trafalgar Square.

THE HOME SECRETARY: The hon. Member must have misunderstood me. What my words were intended to convey was, that it is open to anyone who wishes to bring an action to do so.

*MR. HOWELL: I suppose I must be somewhat obtuse, for I am unable to see the difference between the position the right hon. Gentleman now takes up and that which he assumed a short time ago. I would ask how is it possible, under the circumstances, to bring an action? The only course we can conceive has been taken. The police block the Square, and will not allow anyone to go through; so that the only way in which persons can get into the Square to hold a meeting is by hustling the police, in which case they would be accused of attacking them; so that, instead of the question being one as to the right of public meeting, it becomes a mere charge of assaulting the police. I know the matter is a somewhat difficult one, and am anxious that by something said, either in or out of this House, some course may be taken that will enable us to try the right of public meeting, without coming into unnecessary collision with the police or the military authorities. It seems to me that some easy solution of the question might be found. The right hon. Gentleman paid a compliment to the working men in saying they were not anxious, to promote disorder, and anyone knowing the history of the move-

ment in London will thoroughly endorse that statement. I think that the Government might put this question at rest, either by framing regulations to be observed in regard to meetings in Trafalgar Square, or by bringing in a Bill on the subject. It seems to me that the Police Acts that have been referred to have been looked up after the occasion, as we never knew them to be relied upon before; and certainly they were not the Acts cited by the Home Secretary in the first instance. The first contention put forward was that Trafalgar Square was the private property of the Crown; but I suppose the Home Secretary could not well reconcile that with the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman sitting on the same Bench with him. When the question of the semi-disorderly meetings which preceded the suppressed meeting arose, and there was some fear of a conflict, the First Commissioner of Works was asked a Question in this House, and in reply to that question, he said he had not the power to interfere, and then added that if he had the power he had not the will. This was practically giving to the working classes of London, and to the "fringe" spoken of by the Home Secretary, an invitation to make Trafalgar Square a kind of home. That invitation did not come from the Liberal Members: on the contrary, it was deprecated by them, just as they would deprecate anything tending to bring the people and the police into collision. But since the Government will not accept the suggestion of my hon. Friend the Member for Haggerston (Mr. Cremer), and will do nothing to facilitate a settlement of this question in a Court of Law, they are, I maintain, in duty bound, as the upholders of law and order, to bring in a measure dealing with the subject. I would, before concluding, accentuate the remarks of my hon. Friend as to the attitude taken in 1886, believing that it deserves to be accentuated, because it arose in this way. We were told we had a right of meeting in Hyde Park and some of the other parks of the Metropolis, and we certainly now possess the right; but we had to fight for it continuously until the concession was obtained. Prior to this, however, we were told by the then Conservative Government that we had no right of meeting in the parks, though we had the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square. Under all these circumstances, and in view of all these contradictory statements by Members of Conservative Governments, we say it is the bounden duty of the present Government, before some great catastrophe takes place, to endeavour, and that promptly, to settle this important question.

Mr. Howell

*Mr. CONYBEARE: I must say that I do not share the opinions of some of my hon. Friends on this side of the House as to the attitude the Government have taken on this question. I am not disappointed at being met by a simple *non possumus* on the part of the Government; it is exactly what I expected; and, had they taken any other line, there would have been grounds on my part for surprise. I congratulate the Radicals of the Metropolis on the success of their recent action in having procured a whole evening for the discussion of this important subject. It is less than a week since a convention or conference of the Radical Clubs of the Metropolis met to consider their future action on this matter. We had there the Metropolitan Members represented by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), the hon. Member for Battersea (Mr. O. V. Morgan), and the hon. and learned Member for Hackney (Sir C. Russell), who has spoken with such force to-night, and has put to the Home Secretary questions which he cannot answer; and the result has been that we have brought this question into the front rank, and at the same time have stimulated into a more active frame of mind the representatives of Liberalism and Radicalism in the Metropolis. The question is not whether Trafalgar Square is the most convenient place of meeting; it is as to what are the Constitutional rights of the citizens of London; and the Government may rest assured that, as previous Tory Home Secretaries have been signally defeated on this question, so, likewise, will they be, whether in a Court of Law or elsewhere. The last time this question was brought prominently forward was when Hyde Park was won for the right of public meeting on the part of the people. It is not quite accurate to say, as some have said, that it was won by the passing of the Parks Act. If I recollect aright, the Parks Act was

not passed until some years later, 1872. The fight was really won when our forefathers tore down the railings of Hyde Park. [Mr. J. Rowlands: Your forefathers are now in the House.] Yes. I am glad to think so, and I hope they will stand by us now when we try to assert the right of free speech, though we cannot by any possibility do it in the same fashion, because Trafalgar Square could easily, being a comparatively small space, be occupied by police and soldiery, and rendered impregnable against unarmed men. I, for one—and I think I have a right to protest against the slanders which have been showered upon me—have never counselled the people of the Metropolis to rush upon the batons of the police in Trafalgar Square. I have taken an active part certainly, but not a violently active part in certain meetings held on Saturday afternoons, last summer, and in connection with one of which a case came before the magistrates. And I have deemed it my duty to come forward in assertion of the right of free speech and free public meeting, both in this House and elsewhere; and I defy the *Daily News*, or any other paper, or any other person or politician, to charge me with having incited the crowd in London to violent attacks upon the police, or to throw themselves upon the bludgeons of the police in Trafalgar Square. I took part in the Conference to which I have already referred; but, far from sharing the views which some were prepared to advocate in that Convention, I gave advice of an opposite character, and it was upon my suggestion that the hon. Members for the Metropolis brought the matter forward this evening in the way in which they have done. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members may sneer, but I decline to be bound by a merely geographical interpretation of my Parliamentary duties. Now, the Home Secretary has made a series of comments which are not warranted by the facts as they exist. He has, with a degree of assurance which would be surprising in anyone else, charged us with being afraid to try the issue involved in this case. It is a little too bad that the right hon. Gentleman, having commenced his speech with a criticism of that kind, should wind up by comparing honest artizans and mechanics of the Metropolis to vultures and birds of prey, and that he should use other insulting language with respect to them. With regard to the legal aspect of the question, the right hon. Gentleman says there have been some 20 opportunities when we might have tried the question. There have not been 20, but there have been a certain number, of every one of which we have availed ourselves, and that in spite of repeated obstacles, which I charge the Government with having deliberately thrown in our way, and through which we have not yet succeeded in getting this question tried upon its merits. We have been thwarted, so to speak, by the most miserable and pettifogging quibbles which could possibly be suggested by a third or fifth-rate lawyer. I ventured to ask the Home Secretary his authority for still continuing the illegal proclamation of Sir Charles Warren, and he replied it consisted of the decisions of Justices Charles, Wills, and Grantham. But those judgments were directed, not to the legality of the proclamation, nor even to the question whether there is any right of meeting in Trafalgar Square; and what we desire is that the case should be tried upon its merits, and not upon any bye-issue. Let us see what those cases were. In the first, the decision of Mr. Justice Charles was given in the case of the Queen against Mr. Cuninghame Graham, arising out of the fatal meeting on the 13th November, and which will cause the day to be known in history as "Bloody Sunday." I contend that if the police had not been there, and there had been no illegal attempt to disperse a perfectly orderly and peaceable meeting, there would have been no disturbance. And the disturbance thus illegally occasioned by the Government prejudiced the whole issue, for the charge against my hon. Friend (Mr. Graham) on that occasion was that he had participated in an unlawful assembly, and on that charge he was sentenced, being acquitted on the charge of riot. But even were our right to meet in the Square admitted by all, that same charge might have arisen in the event of a disturbance, from whatever cause, taking place; and, therefore, supposing Mr. Justice Charles, in summing up on the question whether, owing to the disturbance, my hon. Friend had taken part in an unlawful

assembly, had said anything about the question of the right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square, it would have been a mere *obiter dictum*, and would not have had the slightest weight as a judicial decision, and the Home Secretary must know that quite as well as myself. I maintain that there is no more right to interfere with a meeting of working men in Trafalgar Square than there is to interfere with a meeting at any club, unless a dangerous disturbance arises, and then in both cases it might become the duty of the police to interfere. I come now to the Judgment of Mr. Justice Wills and Mr. Justice Grantham. In that case my friend Mr. Dillon Lewis had the courage to come forward in defence of the public rights. And I think every citizen owes him a debt of gratitude for the unselfish devotion with which he has fought this question. The Home Secretary has told us that in that case the Judges decided that there was no right to hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square. That is not so. That question was not raised and argued on its merits—at any rate, no binding decision was given upon it, for in their Judgment the Judges distinctly state, "We abstain from pronouncing a Judgment on the right of public meeting, which we think it is not for us to decide." Therefore, whatever opinion they may have expressed in that case, it was, as in the case of Mr. Cuninghame Graham, a mere *obiter dictum*, which is not entitled to be considered as a judicial decision. The charge preferred by Mr. Lewis was a charge of conspiracy against the police and the Home Secretary to prevent the people from exercising their just and acknowledged rights. The precise charge was that of conspiring by unlawful violence and unlawful means to prevent Her Majesty's subjects from exercising their lawful rights; to injure and annoy the people, and to deprive them of their just rights, thereby endangering the public peace. And I think the following facts upon which Mr. Dillon Lewis framed his charge will, in the opinion of most people, amply justify his action. I am reading from the sworn information of James Parker, of 51, Southampton Street, Camberwell, who states that

"A body of police—some 12 or 15 of the N Division stationed at the Obelisk, marched forward and placed themselves in front of us, and several others marched by the side of the processions, and attempted to push members of the processions out of position and to get into the procession. . . . . It was about four o'clock, and the several processions which I and the other four officers hereinbefore mentioned were leading, were at the foot of the Surrey side of Westminster Bridge, when one of the police constables who had followed at the side of the processionists and had made himself conspicuous by pushing against them and trying to force himself into their ranks, said to the Police Constables near him, 'Now the b————'s will be sent back quicker than what they came.' When we arrived at the centre of the bridge a mounted patrol rode up from the Middlesex side and gave some orders to a policeman, who seemed to be in command of the police who were accompanying our processions, and the man who received the orders said to him in reply, 'Good God, are we to do that?' The Patrol replied, 'That's your orders.' The processions continued on until we arrived at the rests in Bridge Street, when the processions wheeled round between the two rests, and the head of the procession so faced the police, mounted and foot, that were drawn up, to the number of some 300 to 400, at the corner of, and stretching across, Parliament Street from one side to the other, with the obvious purpose of preventing any of the public passing up and through Parliament Street. I put my hand gently on the head of one of the horses for the purpose merely of asserting my legal right not to have the passage over a public highway barred to me, and asked to be allowed to pass through Parliament Street, whereupon I was immediately struck with their fists by two police constables, and thereupon immediately the whole of the police constables on foot drew their staves and commenced a violent and indiscriminate attack upon the members of the procession, beating them over their heads and bodies without provocation of the slightest kind. In particular, I saw one police constable strike a man named John Simpson over the shoulders with his truncheon, and kick him in the back as he was going away from him after being struck. Simpson had done nothing, and was walking quietly immediately in the next rank to me. Simultaneously with the assault on the people by the foot police, the mounted constables charged the processionists, knocking down and riding over them, and I saw one mounted policeman ride a woman down deliberately and ride over her. I and others assisted to pick her up, and she stated she had just been to St Thomas' Hospital to visit her husband, who was an in-patient there. The police also knocked down an old man, who told me he had been a soldier and had fought under Sir Charles Warren. I appealed to Superintendent Dunlop, who was in command there, to call his men off, and I would take the procession another way, and the head of the procession by my instructions moved towards Storey's Gate."

The circumstances are of so extraordinary a nature that one would scarcely imagine they could occur in a civilized country. One would imagine one was reading

a description of the Peterloo massacre or some of the outrages which have disgraced the Government of Ireland at the present day. But the fact is, that I have been reading the sworn testimony of one of those who was present on this particular occasion in Parliament Street within a few hundred yards of this building. And I would ask the House particularly to notice that this was not a meeting that was being held in a disorderly fashion, or even in disobedience to an illegal police proclamation. It was a peaceable and perfectly legitimate procession, as to the regulation, but not the suppression, of which the Police Act contains specific provisions. Mr. Lewis applied for a warrant against Sir Charles Warren, the Home Secretary, and the Chief Commissioner of Works. The magistrate refused to grant the summons, and Mr. Lewis was compelled to go to a Superior Court and ask for a *mandamus* to compel the magistrate to grant the summons. The decision of Justices Wills and Grantham was not that there was no right of public meeting in Trafalgar Square. They declared that that question was not before them, and the only question they did decide was that the magistrate having exercised his jurisdiction, it was not competent for them to review it, however wrongly it might have been exercised. My contention, however, is that the decision of the Superior Court was wrong, and that the Judges had the right to interfere. For in refusing to grant a summons, the magistrate did not exercise his jurisdiction in such a manner as to oust the right of appeal. I hope that after this explanation we shall hear no more from the Home Secretary or from the Front Bench that the question at issue in that case was the question of the public right of meeting in Trafalgar Square, and that it was decided against us by the Judges. I may add to what I have said in this connection that if the magistrate—Mr. Vaughan—had granted the summons Mr. Lewis would have insisted, under the Vexatious Indictments Act, on being bound over to prosecute. In the case of Mr. Saunders, that gentleman went deliberately to Trafalgar Square, by a sort of arrangement with the police, and allowed himself to be technically assaulted in order that he might bring a specific case to trial. I hold in my hand a report of the proceedings before Sir James Ingham, the magistrate, who dismissed it, because, forsooth, Mr. Saunders, who used to be a Member of this House, did not use violence enough. Mr. Corrie Grant, the able advocate of Mr. Saunders, asked that the case might be dealt with in such a manner as to allow of an appeal, but Sir J. Ingham refused, on the ground that he had neither assaulted nor resisted the police. And this leads me to remark upon the ridiculous position to which the Government have brought the question, in their efforts to shirk a fair decision. Mr. Saunders was put out of Court, because he would not resist the police. In Borgia's case, we are ruled out of Court because he did. In Mr. Saunders' case the question of Sir C. Warren's authority for the issue of a Proclamation was argued. Now the Home Secretary in a reply which he gave to a Question which I put to him to-day, stated that the Chief Commissioner acted under the Police Act. It is to be regretted that the right hon. Gentleman does not make his official answers square with the views of the legal advisers of the Government, for I find that in the case of Mr. Saunders, Mr. Poland distinctly stated that these Proclamations do not come under the Police Act, but that they are notices under the Common Law. It is very strange if they are notices under the Common Law that the right hon. Gentleman should come down here and say that they are authorized by the Police Act. I would recommend the right hon. Gentleman to make himself better acquainted with the contents of the Police Act. I am not surprised that he refused to read the section of the Statute when he was challenged to do so by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hackney (Sir C. Russell). That section 52 (of 2 and 3 Vic. c 47), merely provides that the Police may "make regulations for the route to be observed by all carts, carriages, horses, and persons, and for preventing obstruction of the streets and thoroughfares in all times of public processions," not a word about public meetings in open spaces, much less about proclaiming during the sweet will and pleasure of the Police Commissioner all meetings whatever. Now I come to the Borgia case, where

the unfortunate young man Borgia had his coat torn off his back and was nearly throttled by the police for merely standing by the balustrade in the Square and remonstrating against the brutal violence with which one of these moral miracles in blue threw down a poor woman. It is, by the way, a fair comment upon the equitable administration of the law, that this poor fellow was treated by the police with ferocious violence, while Mr. Saunders and myself, though we were speaking and putting resolutions, were never touched by them. In this case, as is well known, the Government promised that a case should be stated so as fairly to raise the questions at issue. On the strength of their pledge, we undertook to hold no more meetings. We have honourably fulfilled our undertaking. The Government have, as usual, basely and dishonourably gone back upon their word; and, through the Treasury Solicitor and Mr. Poland, have got a case stated, which simply prejudges the whole issue, and, as the Home Secretary has himself admitted, is simply useless for the purpose we have in view. In all these cases the Government, so far from assisting in bringing the question to an issue, have confronted us with every difficulty and obstacle that could be put in our way. We have done everything in our power to get the question tested by a competent legal tribunal, and we have been met by nothing but quibbling and pettifogging objections. And now the Home Secretary has the audacity to come and sneer at us for not having tried the case in a Court of law, because we knew we should fail. Such is the candour of the present Government. The Government may protest that they are in favour of public meetings in open spaces; but at the bottom of their hearts they are nothing of the kind, unless, indeed, the dames of the Primrose League choose to hold a meeting in Trafalgar Square to bolster up Coercion in Ireland, when, no doubt, the Government would do all in their power to protect them from contact with the people. The Home Secretary spun a long yarn, and went into elaborate arguments as to the right of meeting in a public thoroughfare. Now, none of us ever claimed an indisputable right of meeting in a public thoroughfare, or that we should block up Parliament Street and interfere with the ordinary course of business. What we claim is the right of meeting in open spaces, and it is that Constitutional right which the Government, in a despotic manner, are trying to deprive us of. We contend that our right to meet in open spaces in inalienable, inherent, and constitutional. Let me point out how we have been deprived of it. It is not that the Government have refused to allow a particular meeting to be held; we know perfectly well that the law permits magistrates to prevent a particular meeting, when it is believed it will cause danger to and alarm peaceable citizens. "But even then it has been expressly laid down by Chief Baron Pallis in O'Kelly v. Harvey," that

> "A magistrate is not justified in forcibly dispersing a meeting on the ground merely that he believes or has reasonable and probable grounds for believing that the meeting was held with an unlawful intent, unless the meeting be in itself unlawful; and a plea justifying an assault on the ground that it was committed by a magistrate in the dispersing of a meeting must either allege as a fact that the meeting was unlawful, or must state facts from which its unlawfulness can be inferred."

That was not however sufficient for the Government. They would not limit themselves to doing that, for they knew they could not always depend on a jury justifying their lawless attacks upon unoffending citizens. So they issued a general proclamation prohibiting all meetings that had been called, or might be called in the future. I challenge the Home Secretary and the Attorney General to point out anything in the Common Law which justifies the issue of a general proclamation of this kind. I say they have no right to deprive us of the right of public meeting, as such a proclamation enables them to do, from one end of the country to the other, for if it be lawful in Trafalgar Square, then they have equal authority to issue similar general proclamations in respect of any other open space. Then if the Common Law does not authorize this action, we are entitled to know if it is done under Statute Law. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary has not cited any Statute Law. He quoted 2 and 3 Vic., chap. 47, sec. 52, as his authority, but that only authorises the Chief Commissioner to prevent the obstruction of thoroughfares on the occasion of public processions,

public rejoicings and illuminations. Now I wish to point out we are not contending that there is a legal right which you can point to in any particular Statute, although I believe if you refer to the Bill of Rights in the reign of William III., you will find the right of public meeting included. We however do not assert a mere right under Statute Law; we take our stand on a far higher principle, we say that we have a Constitutional right which has been sanctioned and emphasized not only by outside authority but by this House itself; indeed we say that the right is anterior to the existence of this House. For this House itself is but the product by evolution of the ancient Teutonic custom of meeting together in the open to discuss the public affairs of the Commune. I find in the Journals of the House, for November and December, 1641, a reference to this particular right, and it appears that the House itself supported the claim of the people to assemble in the open space outside the House, and discharged the constables from the duty imposed on them by the Government to disperse the people. What answer will the Attorney General be able to give on this point? There are many other authorities I could quote in support of my contention—among them the eminent jurist Storey and Lord Erskine. But I do not wish to trouble the House further. I submit that I have laid contentions before it against which the Home Secretary has not advanced and cannot advance a single argument. Now, we are anxious to have this matter settled, and I will, therefore, make this fair offer to the Government. Will you authorize me at the next meeting of the Radical Clubs to state that if we raise this question in a peaceable form by means of a technical assault you will engage that we shall have it fairly tried before a competent authority, and not be met by all manner of technical and pettifogging quibbles? I can only say that if you decline this offer we can only believe that the Government wish to shirk a fair and square decision by the Courts of the country upon the merits of the case, and if that be the case, though I should be sorry to appear in any way to use a threat, I know enough of the public feeling outside to be able to say without fear of proving a false prophet, that many hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House who represent Metropolitan constituencies will have at the next Election cause to regret that the Government have taken up this attitude.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I should not have taken part in the debate, but for the provocation given by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, who, in answer to the hon. and learned Member for Hackney, did not condescend to state on what particular Statute he relied as a warrant for the proclamation issued by the Chief Commissioner. Had he done so there would have been no necessity for continuing the debate. All we have heard from him is that the proclamation was issued under 2 and 8 Vic., cap. 47, and when he was challenged as to the particular section, he made no answer whatever.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: He said section 52.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I am obliged to the Attorney General for giving us this information, but I wish to point out that that section does not contain one word which could authorize the proclamation which has been issued. I am endeavouring to put my point as clearly and as distinctly as possible. I have not the advantage which the right hon. Gentleman has of being a lawyer as well as a Member of this House, but I have the advantage of being guided by Statute Law. And I may point out that the proclamation which has been issued is not a proclamation forbidding some particular meeting, because it was likely to be attended by a breach of the peace; but it was a general proclamation forbidding all persons to go in upon the Square, a proclamation applying to all meetings for all time—meetings which had been called, as well as meetings which had not been called. The Section does not authorize the prohibition of any meeting under any

circumstances whatever. These are the words—

"The Chief Commissioner may, from time to time, and as occasion shall require, make regulations for the route to be observed by all carts, carriage-horses and persons, and for the preventing of obstruction in the streets and thoroughfares within the Metropolis in all times of public proccessions, public rejoicing and illumination: also he shall give directions to the constables for keeping order and for preventing any obstruction of the thoroughfares."

Now, this really means preventing obstruction of the thoroughfare in the immediate neighbourhood of Her Majesty's Palaces, public offices, high courts, parliament, courts of law and equity, police-courts, theatres, and other places of public resort, and I suggest that the only meaning is to give the Chief Commissioner of Police such power as he ought to have for reasonable purposes. He has no power to prevent public meetings at all. There is only a power to regulate traffic, so as to prevent obstruction so far as is consistent with permitting a thing lawful to happen. Now, in answer to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Hackney, the Home Secretary said the question of the right to issue this proclamation had been already decided. I venture to reply that it has never been decided; it has never been technically raised for decision; there has never been an opportunity of raising it, and the decision in the case of the Queen *v.* Graham was a decision solely on the question of unlawful assembly. There was another charge presented to the jury, but the jury found against that charge: which was one of riot, and I need not point out that there may be an unlawful assembly for a perfectly lawful purpose. The purpose of going into Trafalgar Square may have been, and indeed was, perfectly lawful, but the means taken to obtain the end desired amounted in the opinion of the jury to an unlawful assembly. Therefore, the decision that there had been an unlawful assembly in no way alters or affects the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square. The case of *ex-parte* Dillon Lewis is still farther from any decision as to the right to issue any such proclamation. It is abundantly clear that there is no power to prevent theatres being opened, although large crowds might assemble. All that is cast upon the police in connection with these crowds is the duty to regulate the traffic and the routes of carriages, and the direction in which pedestrians shall walk; and it never entered into human imagination until Chief Commissioner Warren issued his proclamation that anyone could do anything of this kind under this particular section. The Home Secretary, in answer to the challenge whether the Government had not permitted this question of right being tried out, said, it was perfectly open to anyone to bring an action for being obstructed in his rights—if such a right exist. I venture to say that no more ridiculous proposition was ever made. It is perfectly clear that I have a right to walk along any thoroughfare; but if it happen that I come into collision—not intentionally or in a criminal sense—with some other person exercising the same right, I have no right to bring an action against him because I have been obstructed in my right of passing along the thoroughfare. It is a most monstrous doctrine which the right hon. Gentleman has suggested. It is true that, in one sense, Trafalgar Square is a thoroughfare, because there are parts of it by which persons passing along might, somewhat inconveniently perhaps, go from one street to another. But it is not entirely a thoroughfare, because the position of the Nelson monument and its pedestal is such as to prevent thoroughfare and to form a space exceedingly convenient for large numbers of persons to assemble without causing any sort of obstruction. Indeed, the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary goes the length of saying that there is no right of public meeting in this country at all. He says you have a right of public meeting in any place hired for the purpose; but let me point out that the general public have no such right, even if they pay for admission to it. The right hon. Gentleman's proposition goes to the length of preventing public meetings entirely in this country. When we wanted peaceably to try this right we were not allowed to do it, and now the right hon. Gentleman taunts us with resorting to force. It is unfortunately true that, in connection with these meetings, some men have used very rash language, which has been utilized by the Home Secretary for the purpose of preventing public

meetings in Trafalgar Square altogether. If Trafalgar Square is not a proper place for holding meetings, then let the Government say so properly by statutory enactment, and let it be declared clearly. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the right of public meeting in the parks—and he especially mentioned Hyde Park—had been given us by Statute. I take leave to say I can find no such thing in any Statute. But the right hon. Gentleman will find—and I had an opportunity of arguing this point before Judges sitting on the Bench—and I had occasion to consider the point carefully when Mr. Odger and others were prosecuted—the right hon. Gentleman will, I say, find that the right of public meeting already exercised was admitted by Parliament to need some restriction, and as a consequence the right of public meeting was limited to certain parts of the parks; the right was regulated by statute law, but it was not created by it. I do not know what the Government's contention is as to the future of the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square. The inconvenience to trade about there, and to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, may be fair ground for enacting something about the right of meeting there; but it is no ground for arbitrary proclamation; it is no ground for so using the police as to aggravate the people. The people of this Metropolis have been law-abiding. The meetings which have been held in Trafalgar Square have been, with a few exceptions, orderly meetings. Huge meetings have been held there, with only such inconvenience as will always arise from the assembly of large bodies of people. If you say Trafalgar Square is a place where, under no circumstances, large bodies of people ought to assemble, that is a fair proposition to put to Parliament for consideration; but that is very different to claiming the right of the Chief Commissioner to prohibit a meeting altogether at his mere whim and fancy.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): Reference has been made to the 52nd section of the Metropolitan Police Amendment Act; but I venture to say that at the time that Act was passed no one concerned ever dreamt that the 52nd section could be put to the purposes to which it has been applied. I will show that, while many points in the Bill were objected to, no one ever supposed that the 52nd section could be applied as a means of interference with the liberties of the people. When the Bill was introduced, it was felt to be a very liberal measure. Captain Wood, we read in *Hansard*,

> "was strongly opposed to the Bill, as it tended greatly to interfere with the powers of the police, and was in some respects of a Republican tendency."

Upon the Report stage, Mr. Hume, who was then very active in Parliamentary life, objected to pay the expenses of the police out of the Consolidated Fund, and suggested that it should be an annual Vote like the Army and Navy. In that case Mr. Hume said that all discussions as to the conduct of the police could take place at the same time. This I mention to show the jealousy that was felt at the time as to the possibility of interference with popular liberty by the police. In the same month, July, 1839, while the Bill was in the Report stage, a terrible riot occurred in Birmingham, and during one of the discussions on the Bill Mr. T. Duncombe called attention to the riot, and read an extract from the morning papers as follows:—

> "Men, women, and children were thrown down and trampled on while the police belaboured them right and left. Broken heads and arms, with other severe wounds, were the result. One man, who was returning from his work, had his teeth knocked out. The poor fellow exclaimed, 'Am I in England!' Several special constables came up at the time and expressed their horror at such proceedings."

On account of what took place, several hon. Members urged strongly the necessity of the House being on its guard against the possibility of an abuse of the law. Mr. Hume saw in this occurrence an additional reason for an annual Vote, instead of a charge on the Consolidated Fund, and said that the House should have a Constitutional check over the police. Mr. William Williams said—

> "The disturbance in Birmingham was created by the police. Now, under this Bill a person raising his arm merely to defend himself from a blow would be liable to imprisonment; and could it be supposed that the magistrates

at Birmingham, under the present circumstances of excitement, would not non-suit in such a case?"

It will thus be seen that Members of the House of that time were on the watch against an abuse of police power, and yet, though a very large number of the clauses were keenly discussed, no one ever referred to Clause 52. Of course, they might expect that it would be made use of to prevent public meetings in time of excitement and danger. No one objected to that; but if they had thought that under the clause a proclamation could be put out indefinitely, or possibly for ever, preventing public meetings in well-known public places, I am sure someone would have criticized the clause. I heartily agree with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) that the interpretation which finds such power in the clause is exceedingly forced, and is such a one as it requires a legal training to appreciate. I quite understand the desirability of coming to a Division as soon as possible, but at the same time the matter under discussion is one of such supreme importance to the peace and order of London in the future, that I must press on the Government the necessity of coming to some more reasonable conclusion in regard to it than they have yet done. Never in recent times, where any such question has been raised between the Government and the people, have the people come worst off in the end. I believe that the Government and the public owe a great deal to the Liberal Members for Metropolitan constituencies for the persistent and patient efforts which they have made at some sacrifice to themselves to prevent any conflict between the people and the police on this subject; but I doubt whether even those hon. Members have the power of preventing such a conflict, unless the people who believe that they have a right to meet in Trafalgar Square see some way of having it peaceably established.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Sir, I should not have attempted to infuse a little life into the very dry bones of this debate, if I had not been directly appealed to by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. I cannot help feeling that that debate has been, to a great extent, but a re-echo of the much more animated debate which took place on the same subject last Session; and I confess myself unable to understand on what ground the question should have been raised in its present shape, or the previous discussion revived. I conceive that the position in regard to the matter has not changed, and that there is no good reason why we should re-open the question on which the House has expressed a decided opinion. I have been somewhat challenged by the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Sir C. Russell). I must say, however, there has been throughout this debate, and even in the able speech of the hon. and learned Member, a confusion between the right of public meeting and the right of free discussion. The House will remember the animated debate which we had on a previous occasion, as to whether Trafalgar Square is Crown property or open to the public. The whole discussion to-night has proceeded on the basis that, either by Act of Parliament, by custom, or in some other way, Trafalgar Square has become dedicated to the public. Now, I assert that if Trafalgar Square has become dedicated to the public for the purpose of the general public passing through and enjoying it, there is no legal right to occupy the Square for the purpose of public meetings. I stated in March last, in terms about which there can be no doubt, that there is no judgment or dictum to support the idea that there is a right to occupy any public thoroughfare for the purpose of a public meeting. There is no judgment which directly or incidentally recognizes any such right. This is not a question of the right of public meeting or of public discussion; it is simply a question of the place in which you are entitled to have discussion. The hon. and learned Member for Hackney has been obliged to admit that it is not a legal right that is claimed, but something that rests upon custom. Free right of access for passage negatives the

right to occupy the whole space for a public meeting. The hon. and learned Member for Camborne (Mr. Conybeare) said that in the case of Mr. Saunders, Mr. Poland, who appeared for the police constables, did not rely upon the proclamation of the Commissioner, but relied upon the Common Law. But the hon. Member forgot that the notice was not that of the 18th of November, under the Metropolitan Police Act, but it was that of the 8th of November, issued with the sanction of the First Commissioner of Works, to which Mr. Poland's observations were directed. With all respect for the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), who, I must say, always argues legal points as if he had been brought up to the law, in my opinion the power given to the police to prevent obstruction will apply when the cause of obstruction is a public meeting. I expressed this opinion last year, and I believe the majority of Members who heard the discussion on that occasion were of opinion that the Commissioner of Police did not exceed his authority in taking precautions that an obstruction was prevented. If the claim made is good in the case of Trafalgar Square, it will be equally good for Waterloo Place, the Thames Embankment, the front of Buckingham Palace, Belgrave Square, Regent Street, or Covent Garden Market. This so-called right is not a right known to the law at all. But, as the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary expressed it, acquiescence in an unlicensed user by a certain number of the public, in contravention of the public rights, may be permitted as long as no evil consequences are likely to follow; but when the Executive find that the result is to involve any section of the public in danger, or to tend to the public inconvenience, it is the duty of the Executive to step in and put an end to that which has been previously acquiesced in. Now, may I say that the only thing that has infused life into the debate has been the want of harmony among Members of the Opposition? I cannot join in attributing to the hon. and learned Member for Hackney the unworthy motive of desiring to reinstate himself in public favour. But still it is a little strange that the debate should have occurred just after some unfortunate discussion. Now, I think all will agree that we ought not to bring political discussion into the streets. As a practical question, regulation is futile; for we could not limit the numbers attending a meeting—indeed, the hon. Member for Lanark has spoken of the population of London warranting the gathering together of 200,000 or 250,000 persons. There must always be danger of a large mob getting out of hand, and where there is risk of danger prevention is ten thousand times better than cure. If there is any foundation for the suggestion that the riot of 1886 was promoted with the object of damaging the then Government, surely that Government might have instituted inquiry, if it was deemed necessary. Her Majesty's Government have endeavoured to do their duty, as previous Governments have done; and I believe that no substantial ground has been shown for raising the question again on this Amendment.

*MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): The Attorney General says that Trafalgar Square stands on all-fours with Covent Garden Market and the other places he mentioned. We do not think so. We conceive there is enough in the peculiarities of Trafalgar Square to mark it off for particular treatment in this matter. The Attorney General speaks of passing and re-passing, but it is ridiculous for anyone to imagine that meetings cannot be held in certain portions of Trafalgar Square without in any way materially hindering the passing and re-passing of the public. The Attorney General also uses the old argument of how many grains go to a heap, and says it is impossible to regulate the crowds who might assemble in the Square. If the hon. and learned Gentleman will read the Bill which I had the honour of bringing in last year, he will see that it is left to those guarding the public peace to remove persons who are endeavouring to attend a meeting beyond a certain prescribed space. Now, the Home Secretary made a

very unwise statement considering the present state of public feeling. If the Home Secretary means that he is willing we or any person shall have the opportunity, by some means of collusion, if I may use the word, with the police, of raising the legal aspects of the question, well and good; we are ready to do that. But if he merely means that people, without any such arrangement or collusion, are to endeavour to hold such a meeting in the Square, then that means simply an invitation to create a riot. In the present state of public feeling, for any person to call a mass of people together to endeavour to carry out such a suggestion, to take up what seemed to be the challenge of the right hon. Gentleman, would be to bring the people into conflict with the police, and this is a course neither I or any other of the Liberal Members of London can advise. On the contrary, we have stood in the way of such a thing, because we do not see what good is to be gained by endeavouring to raise again the question of legality in such a manner in the present state of feeling among the people and at the Home Office because a test case, free from the complications of an unlawful meeting, could not be obtained. Our demand is a very simple one. In the name of a great number of very respectable men, we want, first, to have, if possible, some opportunity of a peaceable kind of obtaining a legal decision on the matter; in the second place, we want not so much that the right of meeting in Trafalgar Square shall be declared as that the right of the Commissioner of Police to prevent such meetings by perpetual decree shall be declared not to exist. That is the real question in the matter, but you go off into the right of public meeting, and that is not the real point. We deny that the Commissioner has this right, and declare he has acted illegally. I challenge the Government to face that point. You say, "Why do you not go to Trafalgar Square?" and some of the more energetic and less thoughtful among us would do so. We reply, "Simply because we do not desire to hurry the people of the Metropolis into violence and possible bloodshed." The Government and the Home Office have much to answer for in disturbing the peace, and not allowing this matter to be concluded. We do not wish to have our meetings interfered with by order of the police. Let them be prohibited by order of the House, or let them be permitted under proper regulations—we have nothing to reproach ourselves in making that proposition. The Attorney General says there is no ground for re-opening this question; and I say — and I speak, I believe, for the whole of the Metropolitan Members on this side—that we shall re-open it on every possible occasion, and shall continue to re-open it until we get the decision we are asking for. I am rather surprised—and I am sure it will be remarked—that no London Tory Member has spoken in this debate. We had the action of the Government supported by the hon. Member for Reading, but no Metropolitan Member has given them support. But I did not rise to prolong this discussion further, but to state distinctly what our position is. I can speak with the authority of all the London Liberal Members, and desire to point out that our action is taken upon the principle that has animated us all through—the desire that the people should not lose any cherished right we and they believe they have; and that no false rights—illegitimate rights if I may use the expression—shall be claimed or exercised by the Chief Commissioner of Police in the Metropolis; but that this matter shall be put by the Government, or, if they like it, by the initiation of a private Member of the House on some footing, so that the prohibition of these meetings by the Commissioner, by means of an universally applicable order, shall not be permitted henceforth; but that the right of meeting shall be recognized under proper regulations. We shall go to a Division on this matter, and we shall raise it again whenever we shall get an opportunity, and urge with all the force we can the same argument we have urged to night, and with, I hope, some endeavour on the part of the other side to meet those arguments a little better than they have to-night.

*Mr. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): My hon. Friend has clearly stated my views, but I, in common with other Metropolitan Members, must express my deep regret at the attitude Her

Majesty's Government have taken up on this matter. The Government does not seem to appreciate the fact that it is a most serious question to be dealt with immediately in a serious, practical way. The Home Secretary has taunted Liberal Members for London with having headed processions, and with having done many things that they really have not done; the fact being that it is due to those Members that further disaster has not arisen with regard to this matter. The Home Secretary refuses every proposal in the direction of peace, and all the comfort we get from him is practically a challenge to hold another meeting in order to obtain a legal decision. It is clear from to-night's discussion that lawyers disagree, and I, as a layman, say, considering the serious nature of the question to be dealt with, the Government should afford facilities for obtaining a judicial decision. In times past a former Tory Government told the people that Trafalgar Square was the proper place for them to hold public meetings, and I believe I am correct in saying that, in days gone by, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has himself addressed a meeting in Trafalgar Square. To-night we find legal opinion in conflict, and Her Majesty's Government refuse to advance one step towards arriving at an authoritative decision. I fear what may result from this indiscretion; but I hope the Government, on reflection, will see their way to some action which will allay the bad feeling that has been excited. I must express my regret that no London Tory Member has spoken. Surely they are as much interested as the Liberal Members are in the peace and order of the Metropolis. The Home Secretary has said the citizens of London are a law-abiding people, and so we wish them to remain. I am sorry our Conservative colleagues do not see their way to assist us by joining in the debate.

Question put, "That the proposed words be inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes 109; Noes 188: Majority 79.—(Div. List, No. 4.)

Main Question again proposed.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I could have wished that I had not been tied to time on the important subject with which I am about to deal. I should also have liked, had it been possible, to have moved my Amendment in its original form. As however, it was not allowed to stand, I wish to express my gratitude to you, Sir, for allowing me to raise, however imperfectly, a subject of such deep importance to many of our fellow-countrymen. I feel that at half-past 11 o'clock at night. with only half-an-hour before me, it is little use to expect to be able to lay my case before the House in the way I should have liked. To many, no doubt, the question of the condition of the working classes will appear a matter hardly worthy of discussion in the House of Commons, or hardly within the province of the House of Commons to discuss; but I am bound to express my strong disagreement with any such view. No one will deny that in the midst of the great wealth of this country there exists concurrently the deepest and most intense misery. It does not need any statement from me to prove to the House the existence of great distress amongst the working classes, distress rendered all the keener by the spectacle of the riches of many of our more favoured countrymen. The measures promised in the Queen's Speech have been referred to. Well, I have read the Queen's Speech, but I fail to find in it any promise of legislation on the subject of the condition of the working classes. If we are not to have legislation from the Government on this subject, how are we to have an opportunity of discussing these matters? Private Members have no chance in obtaining a place in the ballot for it. In the past private Members have always been able to raise questions of this sort, and I do not think

anyone wishes the functions of private Members to be reduced to those fulfilled by an automatic cigarette machine at a railway station. There are functions other than that of trotting into the Lobby to vote at the command of a Whip or Party Leader. Under the circumstances I think I am justified in endeavouring, even at this late hour of the evening, to bring the question of the social condition of the working classes before the attention of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has said, in a speech which has become historic, that we are all now Socialists, but as a Member of the House of Commons I do not wish that all the discussions on these questions should be left entirely to Socialist lecturers at street corners. It seems to me that the House has a duty to perform in discussing these interior affairs of the kingdom, affairs relating to poor men by whose labour we are all sustained. In this matter the House has a function to perform as important as the discussion of the recent questions of Imperial policy, and of those questions which, though perhaps more glittering and more alluring, are not so near to the people's heart as that I am now dealing with. I see from the Queen's Speech that we are to spend this year a large sum of money upon national defences. I will merely express a wish with regard to that, that after we have defended the nation in an adequate manner, and built ironclads in order to pull them to pieces again and build others in the course of a very few years, some of these huge sums of money to be expended may wander in the direction of the poor. No doubt this question of national defences is one of supreme importance to the rich. It is also of importance to those who have a stake in the country—to your landed estate holders of £50,000 or £60,000 a year, and to your great monopolists, commercial and otherwise; but to those whose case I am anxious to bring before the House, I am at a loss to see what interest can attach to any national defence whatever. I wish to ask hon. Gentlemen who disagree with me in this matter whether the lot of the chain-maker of Cradley Heath or of the sweated toiler in the east of London, or of the Scottish Crofter, or of the iron-worker in some of our iron factories, could possibly be more miserable under the rule of the Prussians, or under the rule of the French, than it is now? I do not think that they require any National defences. It is because there are so many men and women in this country who have nothing at all to defend that I think we should have a discussion on their condition. I suppose it is useless to expect that anything practical will result from this debate, but still we might have an expression of sympathy from this House, to which these unfortunate people look in their despair—because it is a condition of despair that is arising amongst them. According to Karl Marx, the working classes are in a desperate condition all over Europe. Railway communication, the telegraph, and other modern developments have so drawn together the working classes of every country, that for the purposes of argument, they may be considered as one vast miserable suffering family. Although considerable advances have been made in some respects, notably on the political side of the question, life has of late become more intolerable to the working classes than it has been heretofore. Mines are worked at greater depths, furnaces have become hotter, and altogether more work is exacted or extorted from the labouring classes—they have, so to speak, to bear more pressure to the square inch than was expected of them fifty years ago. I am not greatly concerned to prove that

there has not been an advance in the social condition of the working classes during the past fifty years. What I am more immediately concerned with is their condition to-day; and the first reason that I shall adduce in support of my case is this, the constant presence of large bodies of unemployed workmen in every industrial centre throughout Europe. Not only in Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Glasgow, Manchester, Dundee, but in Rome and in Paris, and even in such towns as Tunbridge Wells. I hold such a phenomenon, arising at the same time in so many different countries, may fairly be regarded as an indication that the commercial system under which we now live is seriously threatened, and shows symptoms of collapse It has been my unfortunate lot many times to speak of the unemployed in this House, and it has been my misfortune, moreover, never to have interested the House in their cause. No doubt the fault lay with myself; I do not accuse the House. I feel like one of the Governors of Mexico who, when Charles the Fifth asked him what he most felt when he undertook the office he held, replied, "The sense of my own unworthiness." It is no light task for any young Member of this House, standing almost alone as I stand, to come before this House and ask hon. Members to consider a question so vast in its importance and so far-reaching as this of the social condition of the working classes; but I claim to be as good a patriot as any of my colleagues, and I maintain that Great Britain has always been a pioneer on all these questions. I claim that we have made greater strides towards fairly grappling with this question than any other country in the world, not even excepting the United States of America. I am not so blinded by party feeling, or so embittered by opposition, as in any way to wish that the credit of solving or of grappling with these matters should rest with any one party. I want everyone who feels the distress existing around us to add his quota to this discussion. I fear I am too sanguine, but I must express the hope that we shall have some expression of opinion from those who have grown grey in the service of the House, and know what it is to watch the economic development of the working-classes and our social system during the last 30 or 40 years. I trust hon. Members who disagree with me will approach the question with no personal bias against myself, and, approaching the question in a fair spirit of inquiry, will lend me that assistance which I should be willing to lend them if our positions were reversed. Neither the Liberal nor the Conservative Party, so far as I have been able to see, have a policy upon this question, and, so far as I have been able to perceive, the future clearly belongs to those who have a policy. Well, it must be evident to everyone that we cannot look for trade to revive in the same proportion as it has existed for the past 25 or 30 years, and it is evident that in the near future we shall be confronted with this question of the unemployed. Though we are now passing through a slightly improved period of trade, that improved period has been unable to absorb all the workmen in our industrial centres who are out of work, and, reasoning from analogy, it does not seem to me that any improvement in trade will ever be able to absorb these people. It is, therefore, evident, that we shall be perpetually confronted with this question of the unemployed. This is not a factitious question; it is not the result of a conspiracy to represent a state of facts which does not exist. Any hon. Member can satisfy himself on this point by going to the Dock Gates in the East of London, and seeing the crowd of unem-

ployed struggling to get work. Take another instance—the answers received to the most paltry advertisements. We cannot insert an advertisement for the most menial employment for man or woman in a daily newspaper without receiving replies from hundreds of applicants, each ready to undersell the others, each ready to undertake work on almost any terms so that they might get work, and might know that for one night at least they had a place to lay their heads. I have said that I should wish this country and the House to endeavour to find a remedy for this state of things; but, before touching upon the remedies, it is incumbent upon me to endeavour to show that distress does exist in many trades. Distress, I maintain, exists, first, from the severe competition amongst not only the men, but the masters; and, secondly, from the uncertainty of employment. Take the case of house painters employed in London. Their work is uncertain, and for a large part of the year they are bound to remain idle. They are employed by fits and starts, and frequently have to work so hurriedly as to break down their constitutions. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers have the same complaint to make with regard to their members. There are seven or eight millions of adult male workers in this country, and of these there are out of work more or less throughout the United Kingdom some five hundred thousand. In London alone there are some forty-five or fifty thousand men out of work; and these men, it must be remembered, are a constant danger to those who are in employment, as they may at any time come to their employers and endeavour to undersell them, and take the bread out of their mouths. It has been estimated that each workman in the country produces five times as much wealth for the nation as he receives, and if that is the case it is obvious that the hours of labour can be shortened so as to give employment to larger numbers of men, without depriving any individual of the full amount of his present earnings. It passes the ingenuity of man to produce any scheme which will make the poor richer without at the same time making the rich poorer, but it is quite clear that if a workman produces five times as much as he receives, his employer receives more than he is justly entitled to. I think we may claim, therefore, that the source to which we may look to relieve the necessities of the working classes and of the unemployed is the profit of the capitalists. It has been said, and many hon. Members have accepted the proposition on both sides of the House, that rent is that which remains after the cultivator has been paid, and if that proposition is accepted with regard to rent, I think it might fairly be said that profit is that which remains to the employer after the workman has obtained a fair subsistence. I know that no side can claim a monopoly on these questions; but hitherto they have not been fairly debated at all from either side, and too many people have rashly assumed that, by attacking them with a wish to solve them, we may not only solve them, but land the working classes in a far worse position than they occupy to-day. Well, I would wish to go into the question of the hours of labour. There are many figures which I propose to refer to when I have time, by which I hope to be enabled to prove my case. All these questions, if not discussed in this House, transfer themselves to the forum of the streets, where I, in common with the Attorney General and other hon. Gentlemen, entertain the strongest wish they should not be decided. It may personally occur to some hon. Gentlemen that, if my proposition be allowed, you cannot make the poor richer without at the same time making the rich poorer, you attack vested interests and aim a blow at the root of that commercial prosperity which has always been so dear to this country.

It being now Twelve of the clock, the debate, by the Rules of the House, stood adjourned.

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 10.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 14.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 6th March, 1889.

The House met at Two of the clock.

FACTORY INSPECTORS.

MR. KNOWLES (Salford, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if there was any truth in the report that the Government propose to appoint forty-two additional Factory Inspectors?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): On behalf of my right hon. Friend I have to say that the report in question is absolutely without foundation. Provision has been made in this year's Estimates for the appointment of two additional Inspectors, who will not be attached to any particular district, but will be available where their services are required.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (QUEEN'S SPEECH, MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Ordered, That the Order for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Queen's Speech, Motion for an Address, have precedence this day of the other Orders of the Day.—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [21st February].—[See page 41.]

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

*MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Sir, I submit most respectfully that no more important subject can ever come before this House than the question to which I drew attention last night—namely, the social condition of the working classes. I was endeavouring, when the debate stood adjourned, to show that the uncertainty of employment and the long hours of work are the causes of the distress which now exists among all sections of the working classes of this country, and that almost every trade in England works excessive hours. I was also endeavouring to prove that it is owing to these excessive hours of labour that the degradation which exists among all parts of the community is to be attributed. No self-improvement, moral or otherwise, is to be expected from a man who goes from bed to the workshop and from the workshop to bed again, and who passes his life in an unceasing round of toil more fitted for mill-horses than men. I propose to enumerate a few instances in support of my proposition that the hours of labour are excessive. In the first place, let me take the case of railway servants. The *Railway Review* of March 25, 1888, states that upon the Midland Railway Company, upon the Somerset and Dorset Line, there were in July, 1886, 100 engineers and firemen, 35 of whom had worked for 14 hours a day; 69, 15 hours; 27, 16 hours; 47, 17 hours; and 9 in which they had worked for 18 hours a day. In January, 1887, the same Company had in their employment 102 engineers and firemen, 119 of whom had worked for 13 hours a day; 184, 14 hours; 104, 15 hours; 64, 16

hours; 22, 17 hours; and 2, 18 hours per day. They had also in their employment 93 signalmen, and during the months of July, 1886, and January, 1887, there were 644 cases in which a man had worked for 17 hours a day. In view of the fact that the profits of the railway companies have been going up, and that the public, in a large degree, commit their safety to men who are employed for these fabulous number of hours; is it possible to say that social distress and pressure do not exist among men who are obliged to accept employment of this nature? I think it is quite time that the House of Commons should endeavour to do something to place these men on a footing in which they may be able to earn a subsistence for themselves, and support their wives and families without working for a number of hours which seems almost incredible to us who do no manual labour at all. From a Return furnished to Parliament on the motion of Lord De La Warr in reference to the same period — January 1886, and January 1887—I find that there were 6,561 cases of passenger guards who were employed for 13 hours a day; 4,646 for 14 hours; 2,210 for 15 hours; 840 for 16 hours; 356 for 17 hours, and 348 for 18 hours. I do not know whether any hon. Member would like to commit his safety to a railway guard who had been 18 hours on duty. Then, I would ask, may not that be fairly called a case of social distress among the working classes? I may say, generally, that the hours of employment of goods guards, drivers, and firemen are in the same ratio. Signalmen, however, seem greatly to exceed any other class of railway servants in the hours in which they are employed, for I find no less than 716 instances in which they were employed for 18 hours a day. When so many Members of this House are large owners of railway shares and railway directors, and when a percentage of their number directly represent the working classes. I must say that if these figures are correct—and I presume they are, seeing that they are contained in a Government Return.—there is a strong and most indisputable proof that the social condition of the working classes requires the immediate attention of this House, constituting as it does at this moment a grave social scandal. Upon the Cheshire Railway some passenger trains are worked for 17 hours a day, some of the men employed upon it working for only 8 hours on the following day, but it is a glaring fact that many engine drivers and firemen on the line are employed for 17 hours a day, goods trains for 16 hours, and in order to reduce the hours of work the men are taken off for one night per week. This, however, does not compensate them, nor lessen the danger of 16 hours' constant employment. These figures I give upon the authority of Mr. E. Harford, the Secretary of the Railway Company's servants, who, although he may be prejudiced in favour of the men he represents, is a man of strict honour and integrity, and nobody will dispute the accuracy of his statement. In regard to some good's trains which are only run for nine hours and 50 minutes, those hours are not considered sufficient for a day's work, and the men have to work a small special trip in addition. Upon some railways in the month of December last, one week's work was as follows: 14 hours for guards; 13½ hours for good's guards; and from 14 to 16½ hours for signalmen and foremen. I find that in the well-known salt works in Cheshire belonging to Messrs. Brunner the working hours are 12, and during the greater portion of the time the men are stewing over pots of chemicals in which the salt is manufactured. And yet the public prints inform us that the profits of this Company amount to no less than 50 per cent, and that the rate of wages is about 3¾d. per hour for a day of 12 hours. You may talk about slavery; your philanthropic Cardinals may move the bowels of fashionable congregations about the slavery which exists in Central Africa, but I maintain that we have as great white British slavery in Cheshire as they have in any portion of Africa or the East. Let me turn for a moment to the profits made out of women not six miles from this House, by Messrs. Bryant and May. This case, through the heroic exertions of one woman, and a poor woman too, has been prominently brought before the country, and I find that the last declared dividend of Messrs. Bryant and May was 17 per cent. I do not assert this on my own responsibility, but I take it from the published share list of

the company. I find that the average working day of the women employed by this company is 11 hours, and that those who make what is called good wages may earn from 7s. to 8s. 6d. per week. I want to know how it is that there has been no interest aroused in this House upon these questions, and that when we have had deputations from Messrs. Bryant and May's work-people and others, their representations have attracted so little attention? I attribute it to the fact that hon. Members in this House hold shares in these businesses, and that naturally they do not wish to exhibit sympathy with cases of this kind, because they make their own profits out of them. As a matter of fact, it is all a case of profit-mongering; but I assert, without fear of contradiction, that those who hold shares in the two businesses I have mentioned do so with their eyes fully open, and know quite well the conditions under which the *employés* work. Let me turn now to the omnibus and tramway servants in Liverpool and London; 12½, 14½, and even 16½ hours are not an uncommon working day to find among this class of men, and yet we are told that the dividends of some of these companies amount to 14½ and 15 per cent. There, again, I say that the hours of labour amount to a social scandal, and I believe it is a fact that the horses employed are better cared for in this Christian country than a Christian Englishman. There are hundreds and thousands of men who are willing to work but who cannot get work at any price whatever, owing to what I can only call the greed for profit exhibited by most of these companies. It would be invidious to go at length into the evidence now being given before a Committee in the House of Lords, but without referring to *ex parte* statements by Radicals or Socialists, or even philanthropists, I would quote the cut and dried testimony of Mr. Burnett, one of the Government Inspectors. Mr. Burnett, speaking of the nail and chainmakers of Cradley Heath in South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire, says that for 150 years it has been wretched in the extreme. Yet although it has been known for so long a period, no single effort has been made by Parliament to ameliorate it. The industries at which they work are a sort of survival of an older industry, and is carried on in domestic workshops rather than in a factory. Mr. Burnett reports that in the first house he visited he found a poor woman of 50 so thin and worn that she looked ten years older. She was making small rivets, of which, if she worked hard, she could make one hundredweight a week, for which she got 5s. 6d., but out of that sum she had to find coals and pay shop rent. She was burdened with a paralytic daughter, for whom the parish allowed her 2s. 6d. a week. At Springhall, in the centre of the nail trade, Mr. Burnett says there is a collection of rude shops, called by courtesy a factory, where men and women are closely packed. A man and his wife can turn out 15 cwt. per week, for which they get 1s. per cwt. When he visited this place Mr. Burnett found one woman, although the weather was cold, in a state of intense perspiration, while from an overcrowded pigsty outside the window came odours so foul that he was glad to make his escape from the shop. The man worked from six in the morning until ten at night; but the woman, being protected by Act of Parliament, left off at seven. How this woman must bless the Parliament which has prevented her from continuing at the anvil until nine o'clock at night.

An hon. MEMBER: What is the date of that Report?

*MR. C. GRAHAM: November 9th, 1888. Mr. Burnett speaks of the sanitary accommodation as being of the rudest description; the drinking wate being taken, until within a few weeks ago, from a pump situated in the middle of a yard, into the well of which all the surface-sewage was supposed to drain. Yet the rents in this favoured district are high, ranging from 3s. to 4s. a week, not for houses in the ordinary sense of the word, but for little pigsties, the largest room of which is hardly as large as the Table upon the floor of this House. In the principal room the cooking, washing, and every domestic operation has to be carried out, while the kitchen communicates directly with the workshop, into which all the fumes generated by the constant

use of inferior fuel find their way. I have other instances here of girls working long hours daily for wages of 4s. and 5s. a week, and I do submit that the condition of the working people in this particular part of the country is such as demands the immediate attention of the Government. I do not seek to place any heroic remedies before the House, all I have sought to do has been to draw the attention of hon. Members to hard facts gathered from the Report of a Government Inspector, and I may add that if hon. Members desire any confirmation they have only to go and listen to the evidence being given at this moment before the Lords Committee on Sweating. I think no hon. Gentleman will deny my proposition that the best way to civilize these people, to bring them into touch with humanity, to make them feel that they are units of our society, and to make them realize that somebody cares for them would be to endeavour to shorten their hours of labour, so that they may improve their minds, raise themselves in the social scale, and obtain the necessary spirit to enable them to combine and revolt against the present state of affairs. Nails, as you know, Sir, lend themselves to be knocked on the head, and these unfortunate people having had all the spirit crushed out of them as effectually as all gaseous matter is crushed out of the piece of iron by the process through which it passes when being converted into nails, have no thought of rebellion whatever; they even fail to avail themselves of the opportunity now afforded them of laying their case before the public, and they continue to bring new generations into the world to pass through a lot as miserable as their own. Now, I think that the first reform we can introduce is to shorten their hours of labour. The question will be asked—Can this be done without reducing their wages? I say it can be done. Much has been accomplished in the past to ameliorate the condition of the working classes? Why did we pass the Factory Acts? Was it because the people for whom we were legislating were women and children, or was it because they were weak and unable to protect themselves? Have any benefits been derived from the passing of these Factory Acts? Let hon. Members remember what before they were passed happened in the mines of Scotland—in Lanarkshire for instance. Do they forget how boys of tender years were harnessed like ponies to coal trucks, and all day long were running upon their hands and knees drawing these trucks for a paltry wage? Surely it is a matter for congratulation that such a state of affairs has passed away? Is it not a good thing that long hours have been done away with in many factories and workshops? Then ought we not—having seen the benefit of this legislation—to extend those benefits to other classes of workpeople whose condition can only be described as lamentable and as a social menace? It is a social menace, for when men have no property of their own to defend they are ever ready to attack that of other people. The present condition of these people cannot continue for ever, and I wish to see wise legislation on the part of this House. I wish to see an extension of the most precious boon men can give one another—namely, sympathy. It may be said that there is no demand on the part of the working classes for intervention with regard to the hours of labour. My reply is that it is our duty to stir up and form public opinion. I believe that not ten per cent of the working classes of this country are organized or belong to Trades Unions. I am not depreciating the value of the work accomplished by these Unions; I fully value the self-sacrifice of the promoters, but up to the present they have been unable to secure the shortening of the hours of labour, without which, in my opinion, Government cannot hope to deal with causes of social distress and with the presence of unemployed working men in our cities. It is said that there is no demand for a shorter working day. My reply is to point to the Bill, having that object which I have brought in at the instance of some thousands of Scotch miners. Remember that the working classes, owing to the expense of elections, are not able to send such representatives to the House as they desire, but I believe that when they do get that opportunity there will be an overwhelming expression of opinion in favour

of shortening the working day. I admit that the question of foreign competition might prove a most serious difficulty in the way of shorter hours of labour; but it would not be an insuperable obstacle. Where are the wages highest? In Germany, where the hours are long, or in England, where, as compared with Germany, they are short? It will be found that the wages are considerably higher in England. The better paid man who works the shorter number of hours is able to turn out a better article than the ill-paid man working long hours at starvation wages for a very small subsistence. I have an extract here from the Bureau of Labour Statistics for the State of Connecticut. Professor Hadley in it says that a good workman desires and needs short hours far more than a bad workman, for he will do better work in a shorter time. In Russia the working day is 12 hours, in Germany and France 11, and in England 9, yet the English workman does more in 9 hours than the Russian in 12. I have yet to learn that there is not sufficient ingenuity in this House to secure a simultaneous reduction of the hours of labour in all the industrial centres of Europe. Let us take another point showing that shorter hours bring increased wages in their wake. During the years from 1850 to 1885, in Germany, where the hours of labour were 75 a week, the weekly increase of wages was 6s. 3d.; in France with 72 hours, the increase was 6s. 9d., and in England, with 60 hours, the increase was 8s. 9d. These figures tend to prove indisputably that a reduction in the hours of labour does not inevitably carry with it as a necessary corollary a reduction of the rate of wages. Wages in the American Union are invariably higher in those States in which shorter hours of work prevail. In the State of Maine, with an average of 62½ hours per week, the average working wage is 28s. 2d.; in New Hampshire the hours number 66¼, and the wage averages 29s. 10d.; in Connecticut, with 65 hours, the wages are 31s. 1½d., and in Massachusetts, with 60 hours, the average wage is 33s. 4d. I know that this is not an alluring subject; I regret it is not looked upon as one of general interest, but I submit, Mr. Speaker, it is the duty of the House to attend to the wants of—as Thomas Moore quaintly describes them—

> "The poor carpenters, nailers, smiths, and drivers, who, for our behoof and for our profit, endure the rage of weather and suffer the confinement of the workshop and the mine."

When these questions cease to interest the House, then the House itself should cease to exist. I am opposed to all monopoly; hitherto, in this House, I have practically had a monopoly of the question of the unemployed. Now, I wish to destroy that monopoly, and I feel confident that in the future it will secure increased atttention at the hands of the House. I ask hon. Members, therefore, if it would not be easier to try and deal with the problem now, when all is peace and quiet, than to be forced later on to deal with it, at a time, perhaps, when a cycle of years of bad trade will have filled our parish yards with crowds of hunger-stricken men, demanding bread and work? Let me tell hon. Members that should such a day unfortunately come, and should one of them try to disperse the crowds of hungry men by force, it would be better that a millstone be hung round his neck, and that he be cast into the sea. As long as I have the honour of a seat in this House I shall continue to press this question, and if I succeed in awakening the public conscience on this matter I shall feel that I have my reward. I do want to see an end put to this pestilent lack of sympathy. Perhaps I personally attach too much importance to this matter; but let hon. Members remember that I came into this House, not from the merchant's office or the lawyer's court, but straight from the prairies of America, where want is unknown, so that the sight of such misery as exists in London was brought home to my mind with exceptional force. I ask the House, if it will do nothing else, to at least extend its sympathy to these people. They can give it cheaply, and it may serve to show those for whose benefit we are supposed to deliberate that their affairs sometimes occupy our attention.

MR. C. A. V. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I can only say, in supporting the Amendment of my hon. Friend, that whatever may be the result of the Division which will probably

conclude this debate, the few hours which have been spent in discussing this important subject will not have been thrown away; because, even if the Government do not see their way to expressing much sympathy with us, and fail even to suggest a remedy for the distress to which we are giving expression, yet by the ventilation of the subject in the face of public opinion we may hope to have done some little good for the cause which we have at heart, for we may thereby hope to have aroused the public conscience. I may remark that this subject has for the last few years been constantly debated at Congresses and at meetings of scientific societies; but this is, I believe, the first time we have had a set debate upon it in this House. Now on this question the eminent statistician, Mr. Robert Giffen, speaks in the strongest terms, and his language should be taken seriously to heart. He says that no one can contemplate the present condition of the masses without desiring something like a revolution for the better. We are anxious to see a revolution for the better, and we are anxious to see it take the form of a peaceable and Constitutional revolution. We only ask those who scoff at us for insisting on the importance of this question to turn to the pages of history, and consider how the negligence of Rulers in past times has prevented such peaceable revolutions for the better, and has caused revolutions of a graver kind to be substituted for them. We fortunately, in this country, have never seen revolutions of the worst type, nor do we wish to; but human nature is human nature all the world over. We shall soon be celebrating the centenary of the French Revolution of 1789; is it not, then, a season when our minds may be usefully turned to the consideration of the causes of the distress of the people? Now, Mr. Speaker, the proposition which I desire to emphasize and to give some facts in proof of is, not that the people of this country are worse off than they have been in the past, for we may congratulate ourselves that partly owing to the Repeal of the Corn Laws and the enormous expansion of our national commerce since the year 1846, and especially in consequence of the passing of the Factory Acts and other measures, the condition of the people, so far as their wage-earning capacity is concerned, is probably better than in past times. But the fact which I wish to emphasize is, that while the wealth and luxuries of the higher classes in the country have increased, the wealth and comfort and the general physical and moral condition of those classes who are beneath them in the social scale, and upon whose labour the wealth of the upper classes depends, have not increased in anything like a proper ratio. We want to see established throughout the country the principle of a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. We want those by whose labour all classes of the community are enormously benefited to be themselves benefited in a fair ratio; and I contend that at the present time the workers of the country do not enjoy a fair share of the wealth which they are mainly instrumental in creating. In my own constituency the miners of Cornwall labour eight hours a day for what I call the paltry wage of less than £1 a week. The average pay in the Cornish tin mines is but 18s. a week, and you can positively find many instances in South Africa where even uneducated black men can earn with the greatest ease 10s., 15s., and even 20s. per week. There must be something wrong in our social condition in this country to keep our people slaving at these rates, when naked natives in South Africa can earn so much more relatively. We often hear references to the increase of imports and exports, but these figures should not be taken as a conclusive test of the improvement in the condition of the people. The increase is due mainly to the development of labour-saving machinery, by means of which the profits of the employer and the capitalist are enormously increased; and while large numbers of people are thrown out of employment by the change the wages of the workmen are lessened. As Professor Thorold Rogers says—

"In the great majority of cases the whole advantage of a new discovery, a new process, and a new machine rests with the capitalist employer."

Until we succeed in discovering some way by which the profits of labour can be more equally divided between labourers and capitalists, we shall continue to press the urgency of this question. Again, the discovery of new fuel-saving appliances has brought about a great decrease in the cost of production, and a consequent increase in the profits. We contend that in almost all cases the enormous increase in the profits arising from this condition of things goes into the pockets of the capitalist, a very small proportion only going to improve the condition of the labourer. We must also recollect that there has been an enormous increase in the exports of various kinds of machinery, which tends to enable foreign countries to make goods which we hitherto manufactured. I do not complain of foreign competition, but I complain that these facts should be adduced as reasons why we should not lay such stress upon the necessity of improving the social condition of the people generally. I lay stress upon them for the purpose of showing that there is not a fair and equitable distribution of profits between employers and labourers, the latter of whom are the mainsprings of the wealth produced. I admit that the condition of the people in some respects at the present time may be said, when compared with that in olden times, to be considerably better; but if you will consider the facts you will see how far we are behind the ideal state of things we ought to set before ourselves as the only goal which, in a great and so-called civilized country, we ought to endeavour to reach. First of all, let me show the miserable character of the wages of our people. Mr. Mulhall, in his "Dictionary of Statistics," gives the yearly income of the different classes of the people in the country. In the year 1883 he estimates that there were belonging to the gentry class 222,000 families, with an income of £333,000,000, or an average of £1,500 per family; of the middle class there were 604,000 families, with an income of £241,000,000, or an average of nearly £400 per family; of the tradesmen class there were 1,220,000 families, with earnings amounting to £244,000,000, or an average of about £200 per family; and of the working class there were 4,629,000 families, with earnings amounting to £447,000,000, or an average of £96 per family. Now £96 is not a very large sum, even if it represented what every workman might hope to get in the year. It is, however, far from representing anything like what the vast number of our people get. What were the facts arrived at by a careful examination by the Mansion House Committee, which was appointed in March, 1885, to inquire into the causes of permanent distress in London? The Committee, referring to the North-side Docks—not to the wharves on either side—say in their Report—

"The number of casual labourers applying for work at these docks alone usually averages 2,500 to 3,000 daily. The total number of daily applicants for casual labour at all the docks may be roughly put at 20,000. According to the proportion of the above figures, there would be, therefore, from 7,000 to 8,000 men who, having no regular employment other than dock labour, daily apply, and apply in vain, for such work. A slight reduction (say 10 per cent) would have to be made on these figures, to allow for the possibility of some of the men applying at more than one dock on the same day. Regarding the smallness of wages, it is in evidence that the wages of the casual dock labourer do not exceed twelve shillings per week on the average of the year, and that the earnings of the unemployed, picked up by doing odd jobs, average four shillings and tenpence per week per man, this sum being eked out by wife and children's earnings, charitable relief, &c. Female labour is wretchedly paid. In shirt making (for export) and similar employment, a woman gets about ninepence to a shilling for a day's work of sixteen hours. There are hundreds of women who work for three farthings an hour, and find their own needles and cotton. The prices include—shirts, three-farthings each; flannel drawers for Chelsea Pensioners, one shilling and threepence a dozen; soldiers' leggings, two shillings a dozen; and lawn tennis aprons, elaborately frilled, fivepence halfpenny a dozen to the "sweater," the actual worker getting much less. In such kind of women's work, however, the whole profit does not, as is supposed, go to the "sweater," but finds its way in great measure into the pockets of the middlemen and retail dealers. The public, too, have often, in some degree, the benefit of these starvation wages."

Now, it will be said that these are unskilled labourers, and that we must take skilled labourers if we wish to make out our case. As a member of the School Board, I have to inquire into the cases in which fees are remitted. I have here a list of cases in which the fees have been remitted because the parents are out of work or have a very small amount of work to do. Now, these parents are not all unskilled labourers. There are bricklayers, printers, polishers, carriage-painters, silver-platers, harness-makers, and others. In making out our case, therefore, we have not to rely solely upon the position of unskilled labourers. But I suppose it is in the Black Country that we find the hardest work and the lowest wages. I have here a collection of chains, which show exactly what is to be made by the poor chainmaker. Here is an ordinary dog-chain [chain produced]. The man who made this chain was paid for his work 1d. I ask hon. Members, who, perhaps, are not familiar with the facts, and who, perhaps, have not had an opportunity of visiting the chainmaking district, how they would like to make this chain for the money? Some of these chains I have seen made by women. I ask hon. Gentlemen whether they think the wage I have mentioned is one upon which men can live in decency, not to say comfort? Here is a chain familiar to many hon. Gentlemen, being connected as it is with harness; it is called a back chain, and for making it a man receives 1½d. If engaged for a week of 60 hours in making these chains, a man can earn the munificent sum of 9s. This is a very weighty chain, and appears to be a complex piece of workmanship. I assert that the man who can make such a chain is no unskilled labourer. Another chain I have here is one for the making of which the workmen get 1d. It is called a halter chain. If a man works 60 hours upon the manufacture of these chains he can earn 6s. Here, again, you see, this is no mere ordinary chain, but one in which the links are twisted, and therefore not one easy to make. I am sure all reasonable men will agree that something ought to be done to improve the terrible condition of the chainmakers. The next feature of the work of the industrial masses which I desire to bring before the House is the precarious nature of their employment, and I think the facts I will now mention throw some light upon the statistics which are constantly placed before us when Government reporters and others go round and find that men are earning so much per week, and put it down as if it is the wage they receive every week in the year. I quote the following from a very competent authority, Mr. H. S. Foxwell, Professor of Economics at Cambridge, who, writing upon irregularity of employment and fluctuation of prices, says—

"The Rector of Gateshead, in a sermon recently preached before the University of Cambridge, speaks of steady, industrious men, nominally earning 20s. to 22s. per week, actually receiving, on the average, only 8s. or 9s. The London dock labourers, when in work, often earn £2 a week; but they are sometimes six weeks, or more, without work. They are described as living filthily, and as stating that they 'would gladly exchange for £1 a week regular.' Again, in an analysis of 273 cases made by my brother, Dr. Arthur Foxwell, in Manchester, he found that where the nominal wages varied from 14s. to 35s. a week in different occupations, the highest average earnings were those of the regularly employed Corporation labourers, whose nominal wages were 20s. Twelve joiners, nominally receiving 26s. 9d. a week, only averaged 13s. actual earnings; and four masons, nominally receiving 35s., only averaged 10s."

And here is what the Rector of Gateshead said, preaching at Cambridge in May, 1885—

"The wages of artizans, as paraded in Statistical Reports and the columns of the Press, sound fairly adequate. We hear with complacency of 18s. or 20s. per week as the remuneration of unskilled labour in towns; but few, except those in constant contact with the poor, know how very precarious such wages often are—how for weeks and weeks a man, steady, industrious, willing to work, will often not average more than 8s. or 9s., and sometimes for long periods even nothing at all. Life is a sad and hopeless business when a man sits staring into an empty grate, weak and faint, after a weary, dispiriting search for work. No food for himself—and, worse, none for his hungry children; no means of buying any, for the home comforts gathered round him in time of regular employ-

ment have been pawned one by one. Is it any wonder that, flying from his wretched home, he should hover round the one bright, cheerful spot in the neighbourhood, the public-house at the corner, and gladly accept the invitation of the first companion who offers to treat him, and so allow himself to be dragged down deeper still?"

I would also commend to hon. Members a few of the concluding remarks of Mr. Foxwell—such as:

"The precarious nature of employment is a social evil of the first magnitude, which we can and must in some degree remove."

The statements I have made now presented to the House on the above authority are fully corroborated by the following, which will be found in the Report of the Industrial Conference which sat in 1885 under the presidency of Sir C. Dilke. Mr. Lloyd Jones then said—

"We have no stated allowance for lost time. This is so important a matter in connection with wages, that the sum deducted ought to be distinctly stated. Mr. Hey, one of the Secretaries of the Moulders' Union, has prepared an elaborate account from the books of his Society, and finds the time lost by their members to be 20 per cent, or one-fifth of the whole. This calculation, if carried out over the non-union workers, would be much increased, and this has to be added to depressions of trade, like that existing at present; and though generous efforts have usually been made to relieve the sufferings of those out of work, it is not going too far to say that not only savings, but wages yet unearned, have to be largely used to get rid of the indebtedness incurred at such times. Professor Leone Levi, in a recent article in the *Times*, brings the wages of the workers up to 523 millions sterling; but the calculation of Mr. Hey rubs out over 100 millions of this amount."

And the following statement by Mr. John Wilson (late a Member of this House) is remarkable, as well, for the evidence it gives of the spoliation of the miners by the royalty and rent-exacting landowners—

"It was said that in 1883, in the Cleveland District, £400,000 were paid in royalty rents to landlords. Workmen and capitalists were contending with each other—one for greater profits, the other for higher wages—but they might join to bring about a reduction or the abolition of royalty rents. If the £400,000 drawn last year were divided between capitalists and workmen, it would have gone far to prevent the distress now prevailing in Durham. He was Treasurer of the Durham Miners' Union, which week after week had been giving 8s. or 9s. to 600 or 700 men out of employment, who were thus, by the benevolence of men—fellow-workmen—kept off the rates. If this £400,000 had been divided between employers and workmen, in place of destitution there might be prosperity. What right had the landlord to the mineral?"

I am not now upon the question as to what we shall do to remove this condition of things, but it is the duty of us, as legislators, to take these facts into consideration. I, for one, will not believe that it is beyond the power of Parliament to devise some means to correct these great evils. In the next place, I would ask the House to consider what is the effect of the present state of things upon the poorer classes, physically and socially? And in this connection it is important to notice that, out of their pitiably small and precarious earnings, the poor have to pay an altogether disproportionate amount in rent of homes, which, both from a sanitary and also a moral point of view, are too often wholly unfit for human beings to dwell in; and, further, that for all the necessaries of life they have to pay higher prices for inferior goods than people more fortunately circumstanced. Thus, as to their dwellings, in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes we find it stated that—

"A large class whose earnings are the lowes are the costermongers and hawkers, whose average appears to be not more than 10s. or 12s. a week. This represents continuous toil, and although the income is a most precarious one, yet it is not rendered so by days and seasons of idleness, as is the case in occupations about to be mentioned, but depends on the state of the market. Dock labourers follow such an uncertain employment that their average wage is said to be not more than 8s. or 9s. a week, and at the highest from 12s. to 18s. a week. Fivepence an hour is about the rate, but the supply of this unskilled labour is so much in excess of the demand, that they are not employed, upon the average, more than two days a week. The average of labourers' wages in Clerkenwell is about 16s. a week, and this means that there are many who earn less. Mr. Marchant Williams says —'From investigation of parts of Clerkenwell, St. Luke's, St. Giles's, Marylebone, and other quarters, I find that 88 per cent of the poor pay more than one-fifth of their income in rent: 46 per cent. from one-fourth to one-half; 42 per cent from one-fourth to one-fifth; and only 12 per cent less than one-fifth of their wages in rent. These figures are gathered from nearly 1,000 dwellings. Among them 3s. 10¾d. is the average rent of one room let as a separate tenement, 6s. of two-roomed tenements, and 7s. 5¼d. of three-roomed tenements. Rents in the congested districts of London are

getting higher, and wages are not rising, and there is a prospect, therefore, of the disproportion between rent and wages growing still greater. Evidence shows that the witness just quoted has erred, if at all, on the side of moderation. In South St. Pancras, 4s. a week was paid for one room 10 feet by 7, at 10 Prospect Terrace ; the same at 3, Derry Street ; at 22, Wood Street, 5s. was paid for a single room, and if cheaper quarters were needed, an underground kitchen must be sought at a rent of 2s. 6d. a week. At 8, Stephen Street, Tottenham Court Road, 5s. a week was paid for a single room in great decay. In Chapel Row, and Wilmington Place, Clerkenwell, 3s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 5s. were rents for single roooms. In Spitalfields, the average rental for one room was from 4s. 6d. to 6s. a week. Most of these quotations are for unfurnished rooms. In Notting Hill, 4s. or 5s. a week per room was the rent of furnished rooms, and in the Mint 4s. 6d. for the same accommodation ; the character of the furniture as a rule, in its wretchedness is beyond description. Instances might be multiplied from the Metropolitan evidence. Many of the tenements just cited are dwellings referred to as instances of extreme over-crowding.' "

These are not singular figures, nor figures relating solely to the Metropolis. I have here a report of a lecture upon "Life in One Room," by Dr. Russell, the Medical Officer of Health for the City of Glasgow. Some of Dr. Russell's remarks are deserving of the serious attention of hon. Members, because the conclusion they point to is that the congestion of our working population in great cities is tending greatly to the moral as well as physical deterioration of our race. In Glasgow much has been done to improve the dwellings of the poor and the general condition of the people; but Dr. Russell says—

"Of the inhabitants of Glasgow 25 (24·7) per cent live in houses of one apartment; 45 (44·7) per cent in houses of two apartments; 16 per cent (6·1) in houses of four apartments; and only 8 per cent in houses of 5 apartments and upwards."

And then he goes on to say—

"I am anxious to emphasize this difference by the accumulation of facts which can be expressed in cold figures. Figures are beyond the reach of sentiment, and if they are sensational it is only because of their terribly undisguised truthfulness. You must not think of the inmates of those small houses as families in the ordinary sense of the term. No less than 14 per cent of the one-roomed houses and 27 per cent of the two-roomed contain lodgers—strange men and women mixed up with husbands and wives and children within the four walls of small rooms. Nor must I permit you, in noting down the tame average of fully three inmates in each of these one-apartment houses, to remain ignorant of the fact that there are thousands of these houses which contain five, six, and seven inmates, and hundreds which are inhabited by from 8 up even to 13 per centage, though an accurate, are but a feeble mode of expression for such facts regarding men and women like ourselves. I have told you that in 1881 the population of Glasgow was 511,520 persons, and that of those 25 per cent lived in one room, and 45 per cent in two-roomed houses; but what does that mean? It means that 126,000 persons live in those one-roomed and 228,000 in those two-roomed houses."

Then Dr. Russell goes on to say—

"There you will find, year after year, a death rate of 38 per 1,000, while in the districts with larger houses it is only 16 or 17."

These are figures and facts which it is impossible for us to contradict, and which it is dangerous and almost criminal of us to neglect. Now, the questions of the earnings and the inadequacy of the homes of the poor are not by any means the only questions we have to take into consideration in dealing with the social condition of the people. The cost of living is another element in the problem which it would be idle for us to underrate. Mr. George R. Sims, one of the noblest of the many philanthropic men who have devoted their lives to doing something to improve the condition of the people, points out that the poor are obliged to purchase in small quantities, and therefore get the lowest value for the highest price. For coal, for instance, the poor pay 1d. for 7lbs., or 1¾d. for 14lbs.—that is, at the rate of £1 7s. 6d for a ton, which is only worth 16s. or 17s.; and butterine is sold to the poor at 1s. 6d. per lb., while it is not worth more than 9d. or 10d. Tea is bought by the humbler classes at 1¾d. or 2d. per oz., which means 2s. 8d. for a pound, which is only worth 1s. 4d. Now, I do not propose to trouble the House with figures relating to the pauperism in our midst; but I desire to point out how every pound of the income of this country is spent—what proportion goes to the Army and to the Navy, and what proportion is spent in the actual government of the country. Of every £ of income we find that the Customs

and Excise Duties contribute 12s. 7¾d. and that proportion of the taxation of the country is the one which falls most heavily upon the lower classes. Of every £ of Expenditure of the country we find that 16s. 1½d. goes for war, leaving only 3s. 10½d. in the £ for all other purposes. If we take the year 1881, we find that 35·08 per cent went in Interest on Debt resulting from past wars, 31·95 per cent in expenditure for war, and 32·97 per cent towards other purposes connected with the Government of the country. Or put it in another form. We can show that during the present century the total income of the country was 5,613 millions, of which 3,550 millions, or more than three-fifths, came from Customs and Excise Duties, including Post Office, Crown Lands, &c., and that four-fifths of the whole Expenditure, or 4,660 millions, went in expenses of war, war debts, and preparations for war. When we find facts such as these, and seeing that so great a proportion of the burden falls on the working classes, we have a right to contend that they should reap far greater benefit from the expenditure than they possibly can do now, and that it would be infinitely better to diminish and not to increase, as you are now proposing to do, the enormous sums expended on war and warlike preparations. If you must vote larger sums, let it be for the amelioration of the condition of our people. There is, in particular, one class of expenditure too little thought of in this country, and to which, if it were less grudgingly granted, we might look as providing one of the best remedies for many of the evils of which we complain. I refer to education. In England we spend only £6,685,000 on education, as compared with £28,900,000 on the Army and Navy, while in the United States they spend £18,600,000 on education, and only £9,400,000 on warlike preparations. Our contention is, that we should reverse our proportion of expenditure; that we should spend a great deal more on what tends really to the benefit of the people, the prosperity of the country, and cut down — very much more than I am afraid many of us are at present inclined to do—the terrible amount continually lavished, thrown away, and wasted in all manner of warlike expenditure. Before I resume my seat I should like to touch on another subject and in only a few words. I do not wish at all to elaborate the question of remedies to be devised. That is the duty of the Government. I am not here to maintain that there is any one special cause of the evil, and much less that there is any special panacea to be advocated for the present state of things. I know it is an exceedingly complicated social problem, and all I now ask is that the Government of the country should devote some attention to, should show some sympathy—if only by a casual reference in the Queen's Speech—with the sufferings of our people. Still, in one direction we may look for a remedy for one principal cause of the difficulties that surround us, the congestion of population in our great towns. Here we may for a remedy look to migration—not to emigration—of the unemployed labourers for the purpose of taking up and occupying land at present unoccupied or not tilled in different parts of the country. I know it will be said that it is useless to settle on our farm lands the unemployed, who are, for the most part, ignorant and unskilled labourers. But the persons who advance that objection are the very advocates of the deportation of these same ignorant and unskilled labourers to our Colonies, which, however, refused to be burdened with them. In the United Kingdom, including the Channel Islands, there are 80 millions of acres of land, and in 1880 there were only 48,335,000 and odd acres under cultivation, notwithstanding that at the same time the population was 34,862,000, or less than half the total number of acres. Now, in a rich country like this, where, without exaggeration, the population is

in the proportion of one to every two acres, surely it is idle for anyone to get up and say the country is over-crowded, and that we must drive out and expatriate men from our midst and send them to other countries to assist with their skilled labour in developing the industries of those countries in competition with ourselves. We find, at the same time, that one-half of our food supplies comes from abroad. I do not dwell on the danger this presents if we should be engaged in a war with any great Continental nation—it is sufficiently obvious. But, if 40 millions of acres can produce food for half our people, we may fairly reason that if the whole of the 80 million acres, or the greater part, were under cultivation, you would not only be able to keep all your people in the country, without continually drafting numbers of them out of the country, but you would be able to be very much more independent, and produce, at any rate, a much larger supply of food to maintain them. But some people say, "This is impossible; the land remaining untilled is barren land, and will not repay cultivation." That is simply not true, and will never be true so long as there are millions of acres withdrawn from cultivation, merely to satisfy the sporting and predatory instincts of our land monopolist aristocracy. But taking only those lands which are, or are supposed to be, at present under cultivation, I may point out that at the present moment the produce of the land is not nearly what it might be. I can show that if a system of small holdings were introduced, which would mean placing on the land that is cultivable some hundreds of thousands of starving people who now go to make up the congestion of population in our large cities, you at once supply homes for the people and necessarily increase the output from the soil. For instance, if, as is estimated, the annual value of the agricultural produce of the three kingdoms is from £250,000,000 to £300,000,000, as it was when this pamphlet, from which I now quote, was published a year or two ago, and the number of acres under cultivation 47,000,000, then we find the annual yield to the acre is scarcely £6 10s. That being so, let us see what evidence there is that this can be increased. I take a few words from a speech delivered in 1885 by Lord Carrington, well known as a sound agricultural authority. He said—

> "Around High Wycombe he had 800 allotment tenants, who occupied a tenth of an acre each, and who paid him the agricultural value of the land, plus the rates. The net produce of each allotment was £4—that is, £40 an acre. The most a farmer could make out of the same land under plough cultivation would be £7 an acre. So in these 80 acres under allotments £2,640 worth of extra food is produced, and altogether £3,200 worth of wholesome garden stuff is grown, the result of the spare time and labour of artizans which would otherwise probably have been wasted."

Commenting upon this the writer of this pamphlet says—

> "Then surely it may be asked, if land can be made to produce food stuffs to the value of £40 an acre, under spade labour, and during the leisure hours of the mechanic, why cannot the farmer at least produce half of that amount—that is, £20 an acre—in lieu of the niggardly £7 per acre under plough cultivation?"

Why indeed? And with these facts before us it is almost a crime not, at any rate, to try the experiment of relieving the congestion and misery of our cities by migration, by establishing village communities in those rural districts which are now almost bare of a rustic population. If such an experiment were only partially successful, it would, we are satisfied, do much to relieve the miseries and social evils we have laid so much stress upon; and, at the same time, it would tend to the social elevation of the people, and remove a great danger which exists in the possibility of our food supplies being cut off, if we were at war with a Continental nation. It would be a more sensible way of meeting danger than by increasing our armaments. It is an utterly futile and absurd idea to suppose we can always keep pace with foreign armaments by lavishing more and more on warlike preparations and home defences. Let me say, too, on behalf of the cause we champion, that we do not ask your charity; we do not want your money; we do not want a grant for the starving poor to salve the consciences of the rich, and to tide over a period of great dis-

tress and misery; we ask for more justice and less charity. We ask that the absurd laws which now restrict the industries of the country and prevent the transfer of land should be done away with. These things can be done by legislative means. We ask you to lighten the burden of labour, and one and the most important means of doing this is to break down that monopoly in land which is at present the curse of the country. I do not wish to say a harsh or an offensive word, but I would remind hon. Members that we who have arrived at a position of social comfort and independence, some by our exertions, while others have never known a day's toil, may be regarded by men and women who toil for long hours day after day, month after month, for a paltry pittance insufficient for the necessaries, much less the comforts of life, not unnaturally with bitter feelings as an idle class whom their labour supports; and I would urge the House on the score of humanity, if on no other grounds, to devote some serious attention to these matters, and to make one united effort to deal in a practical and not merely a speculative spirit with this great social problem, and endeavour to solve it in a way that shall conduce to the future greatness and prosperity of our common country.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): There was one remark from the hon. Member for North West Lanark (Mr. Cuninghame Graham) in his speech last night with which I entirely agree, as, I am sure, will every man in the House, that the question he has brought forward is one of great and pressing importance. But whether or not the opportunity the hon. Member has taken of bringing this subject before the House is a convenient opportunity, at the end of a long debate upon the Address to the Crown, for raising a question of such vast importance—interesting, as it is, to so many Members—is another matter. But, however, I do not desire to make any complaint at his having brought forward a subject in which, I know, he has long taken a very deep interest. I make no complaint even of the length to which the hon. Gentleman carried his observations, although his speech, taking the part delivered last night and the conclusion to-day, was not a short one. I make no complaint of that; but I think I am justified in drawing the attention of the House to the course which has been pursued, to the large demand upon the time of the House which the last speaker has made, both on this particular occasion, and also on a previous occasion upon the Amendment last night, when he favoured the House with a speech extending over an hour and a quarter. To-day he has again favoured the House with a speech overloaded with a mass of detail, and extending to an hour and ten minutes, while the hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well, and the House knows perfectly well, from the statement of my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, and concurred in, I think, by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gladstone), that the exigencies of Supply and other public business demanded that the Address should have been disposed of last night or to-day. Yet, knowing there were a large number of Members who rightly take an interest in such an important question, and knowing there are important subjects on the paper, upon which some Members of the House are anxious to say a few words, the hon. Gentleman thinks it right and consistent with his duty and the interest of the subject under discussion to take up more than an hour of a short day, and when the time remaining for other business can be counted by minutes rather than hours.

*MR. CONYBEARE: May I be allowed to explain——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*MR. RITCHIE: I think the hon. Member has already occupied sufficient of the time of the House.

*MR. CONYBEARE: Not more than was wanted.

*MR. RITCHIE: I am not disposed to give way to the hon. Member.

*Mr. CONYBEARE: Then do not make charges.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*Mr. CONYBEARE: Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman is charging me with obstruction. It is monstrous.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*Mr. RITCHIE: Although I agree with the hon. Member for North West Lanark that the matter is one of great public importance, yet I was unable to agree with him when he specifically stated there was a want of sympathy on the part of the well-to-do classes with the class whose claims he was bringing before the House, and that in reference to questions of this kind there was a desperate lack of sympathy. Well, I do not wish to use strong language in reference to those remarks; but I entirely deny the suggestion, and absolutely repudiate the statement that there is any lack of sympathy on the part of Members of this House, or the well-to-do classes generally, with the sufferings of the poor, or the condition of the working classes. I do not believe that at any time or in any country in the world was there ever so large an expression of sympathy with the working classes and the poor than exists in this country at the present time. I do not believe that, going back for many years, it is possible to point to any country where more has been done, both by means of money and by means of personal help, than has been done, by the well-to-do classes in this country, to raise and improve the position and do the best they can for those not in so fortunate position in the world.

Mr. GRAHAM: I said nothing of charity.

*Mr. RITCHIE: The hon. Gentleman said the rich did not consider the condition of the poor with consideration, and then went on to say that more of the working classes were unemployed, that their lives were made more unendurable at the present time, and that more work was extracted from them than had ever been the case before.

Mr. GRAHAM: Undoubtedly.

*Mr. RITCHIE: Both propositions I emphatically deny.

Mr. GRAHAM: Well, prove it.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I say life has been made much more tolerable to the working classes of to-day than ever it has been before. I would point to such institutions as that which happily now exists in the East End of London—the People'sPalace—which has been erected, to a large extent, by contributions from all classes, principally from the wealthy classes, when, day by day and night by night, men and women toil in every conceivable way in order to afford amusement, relaxation, and instruction to the working classes of the East End. That movement is spreading east, west, north, and south, and in a short time similar institutions will be established in every part of London erected for the sole purpose of raising the condition of the poor, and adding to their amusement, happiness, and comfort. I say it ill becomes anyone under such circumstances to endeavour to draw class distinctions between rich and poor, to endeavour to say to the people—because these statements go outside and reach those who, perhaps, are not so well informed as they might be—that there is an indisposition on the part of the class who are well-to-do to do anything to raise the condition of the poorer classes in the Metropolis or elsewhere. So much for the life of the poor being made intolerable. But it is not only in such ways that life is made more tolerable. Legislation administered by local authorities have been attended with most beneficial results, providing all kinds of comforts and conveniences for the people—parks, free libraries, museums, hospitals, baths, and wash-houses to improve the condition of the poorer classes. I was looking at a Return only to-day, which showed that in the year 1885-6 local authorities in England and Wales had, without counting borrowed money, out of the income of the year expended no less than £702,000 on those matters to which I have referred. Year by year the disposition is growing to do everything that can be done to ameliorate the condition of the poorer classes. The hon. Gentleman in the course of his speech

said "working classes" and "unemployed" were convertible terms——

*MR. GRAHAM: Very nearly so.

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Gentleman says very nearly so. Well, I am quite sure they would very largely become so if the remedies he proposes or supports were adopted. I am quite sure that the results of such proposals as he has shadowed forth without absolutely advancing them, if such were put into operation, the result would not be more work or higher wages, but less work and lower wages for the working classes. While we all sympathize with the condition of many of the poorer population, while all desire to see more employed and at better wages, when we come to consider how this desire is to be accomplished, then we are met with suggestions of all kinds, many of which will not stand the test of examination, many of which, instead of bettering, would make worse the condition of the people. In his remarks last night the hon. Gentleman said there must be some kind of State regulation of labour.

*MR. GRAHAM: Undoubtedly.

*MR. RITCHIE: That is the doctrine of pure Socialism?

*MR. GRAHAM: Undoubtedly.

*MR. RITCHIE: Then we understand that the doctrine the hon. Member preaches is Socialism? He asks the House to adopt, as a means of raising the condition of the working classes, the tenets of pure unmitigated Socialism?

*MR. GRAHAM: Undoubtedly.

An hon. MEMBER: Why not?

*MR. RITCHIE: Because undoubtedly and rapidly the effect of this State aid would be to deprive individuals of that stimulus which now influences them to improve their condition. It would bring the good workman down to the level of the bad workman. The hon. Member shakes his head, but that is what Socialism would do.

*MR. GRAHAM: No.

*MR. RITCHIE: It would bring the thrifty, industrious, temperate workman down to the level of the thriftless, idle, drunken workman—that is what Socialism would do by removing individual effort. I presume the hon. Gentleman also adopts the other planks of the Socialistic platform? He would like to see all property equally distributed. Well, let me tell him, if he desires to do that, he will not have only to reckon with the richer classes, but the working classes too—the working classes who, in their millions, possess property in land, houses, savings banks, building societies, and friendly societies. These are the best of our working classes, and I venture to say they would be the first to repudiate the Socialistic doctrine the hon. Member desires to propound. I venture to think that the hon. Gentleman, in preaching that doctrine, will have an extremely small following in this country, however it may be elsewhere. He speaks of the difficulty of the working classes returning Representatives here. I am happy to recognize many Gentlemen in this House, some of them among the most respected Members of the House, who are essentially the Representatives of the working class.

*MR. GRAHAM: I said so.

AN hon. MEMBER: Nine.

*MR. RITCHIE: There is not one of those hon. Gentlemen who would get up here and advocate the doctrines of Socialism on behalf of his constituents. I say, instead of such doctrines being of any benefit to the working classes, they would reduce the whole class to one dead level of uniformity, and do more harm than good. The hon. Member says the hours of labour should be shortened. He or his hon. Friend talked of the Factory Acts, and asked had they been of benefit? Unquestionably they have been of benefit, but we have never yet attempted in this country to deal in such a way with adult labour.

*MR. CONYBEARE: No reason why you never should.

*MR. RITCHIE: True; but the answer is that the great bulk of the working classes would object to such treatment.

*MR. CONYBEARE: How about the Trades Union Conference?

*Mr. RITCHIE: Because they know perfectly well they are able to take care of themselves. They have their own organizations, their own trades unions, and prefer to manage their own affairs and regulate their own hours of labour, and would decline to accept any regulation of their hours of labour by any Act or any Government. In saying this I am sure I shall be supported by the great bulk of the working class. The hon. Member quoted a few instances here and there of long hours of labour, and I am not prepared to say that men are not overworked; but I say that is no reason whatever why you should bring in a Bill applicable not only to those cases mentioned, but to all industries throughout the country, and which would in its operation be ruinous to half of them. One of the great evils of our own trade is foreign competition, said the hon. Member, and there I agree with him. But what does he propose to do? He proposes to still further tie our hands in competition with foreign countries. He said hours are longer in Germany, and that wages are higher here than in Germany. Well, I do not know what he desires to infer from that. The lesson I draw is this:—that if it be the fact that in Germany and France the people work longer hours for less wages, and if we find considerable difficulty in competing with them in trade, then, if you still further reduce our hours of labour and keep up the wages, our difficulties will be largely increased. Another probable result would be to drive capital out of the country altogether. The hon. Member, as others often do, speaks of England as if we were the only country in the world. Does the hon. Gentleman doubt for a moment that if restrictions such as these he speaks of were placed upon our manufacturers in this country—does he doubt that these manufacturers would take their capital to another country where such restrictions are not in force?

*Mr. GRAHAM: They would not take the workmen.

*Mr. RITCHIE: No; but they would take machinery and capital. The hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that this has already been done in several cases. To proceed in the course he proposes would still further tie the hands of capitalists, and there would be an increased emigration of capital from this country. Then what would be the condition of our working classes? Now, I do not doubt that in some cases there is much to be done. The hon. Member cited one case which has been more than once brought before the House—that of the Cradley nail and chainmakers—and the hon. Member for Camborne has put before us visible evidence of the work done by those employed in the Cradley Heath district. He has drawn a very painful picture from reliable sources, of the condition of things unhappily existing there. But he knows perfectly well that, so far as this particular question is concerned, it is at the present moment under investigation by the Lords' Committee appointed to examine the "sweating" system. He knows that the Government are anxious to give that Committee every assistance in their power not only with the view of getting at the actual facts, but also to give it every assistance with the view of providing remedies. If the hon. Member does not know, I can tell him that the Home Secretary has put at the disposal of that Committee an Inspector of the Home Office, who has been down to the district and investigated all the circumstances of the trade there, who has reported upon them, and is prepared to give every assistance in his power.

*Mr. GRAHAM: Allow me a word to justify myself. I do not charge neglect against the Government in reference to Cradley Heath. I know the Home Office sent an Inspector to report. I only alleged the case as evidence of the distress existing among the working classes.

*Mr. RITCHIE: I never said the hon. Member made any charge, but he described Cradley Heath as one of the plague spots of the country, and what I wish to say is, we have done all we can to investigate the matter. We must now wait for the Report of the Committee before we can see to what extent evils exist, and what would be the proper means of providing a remedy. I admit that evils do exist, and it is not our fault if nothing has been done. So I say in reference to the sanitary conditions that, as I have told him, the Local Government Board were only anxious to move, but could not until we had some

representations which as yet I have not had.

*MR. CONYBEARE: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I made a strong representation on the subject, accompanied by a memorial signed by residents in Cradley, and pressed it on the attention of the House last Session, though the right hon. Gentleman was not in his place.

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes, but we want a representation under the Public Health Act. It is not sufficient to make a statement in this House. We can only move within the lines of the Act.

MR. CONYBEARE: By a memorial?

*MR. RITCHIE: I stated distinctly last year if the Local Government Board received representations under the Public Health Act, we would at once take action. So far as I know no such representation has been made. The hon. Member for Lanark stated last night that our commercial system was in a state of collapse. But I do not agree with him. Undoubtedly there has been a period of stagnation existing for years past, but I am happy to think it is rapidly passing away. There is every indication that an improved condition of things exists now. If we look at the question of wages it will be seen that in all districts they are advancing, rapidly advancing, and have now reached the highest limit during the past ten years. Returns published in the Board of Trade Journal for February show on the reports of Trade Societies that of a total of 237,208 workmen only 7,390 are out of work a proportion of 3·1 per cent. In 1886 the proportion of unemployed was 11 per cent.; in 1887, 10·3 per cent.; in 1888, 7·8 per cent.

*MR. GRAHAM: These are members of Trade Societies?

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes. I am aware that those who make these returns refer to what is called skilled labour, but, as the hon. Gentleman knows, skilled labour almost invariably requires to be supplemented by unskilled labour, and it is impossible to suppose that the demand for skilled labour should thus have enormously increased within the past few years, without a corresponding increase in the demand for unskilled labour. But the prosperity of the working classes at the present time is shown in more ways than one. The capital in the Post Office and Trustees Savings' Banks has increased from £29,000,000 in 1873 to £104,000,000; the capital of the building societies, in which the working classes largely invest their savings, has increased from £20,000,000 in 1876 to £53,000,000 in 1886; and the capital of the provident societies from £6,000,000, with 508,000 members, to £11,000,000 with 841,000 members. These figures show the great increase that had been made in the prosperity of the working classes. No doubt there are a considerable number of unemployed, but these figures, I think, will show the House that the unemployed are not as numerous as they were, and that the savings of the people have been enormously increased. Of course, I am aware, not only that there exists, but that there always will exist, a considerable number of unemployed, many of whom are reduced very often to great straits. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cuninghame Graham) spoke of the dock labourers. Well, Sir, this is about one of the hardest chapters in the whole history of unemployed labour, and no one who has seen these unhappy people at the dock gates in the morning waiting in the hope of obtaining some casual work can fail to have been overwhelmed with sympathy for the sufferings they undergo; but it ought to be borne in mind that the refuse and dregs of the unemployed are collected at the docks. That is their last resort. Unfortunately, it must be admitted that large numbers of these unemployed are unemployed because, owing to weakness brought on by ill-health or intemperance, they are incapable of doing any kind of hard work. The fact must be faced that, even in the most prosperous times, there must be large numbers of persons unemployed, and reduced to the lowest depths of penury. Great efforts are, however, now being made on the part of philanthropic individuals to meet this distress, and there never has been a time when more people have been associated together in the poorer districts of London, and in different parts of the country, to do their best to alleviate this state of things. But I am glad to be able to say that, so far as the pauper returns are concerned, there also we have considerable cause for congratulation. The pauperism

of England and Wales in 1888 was 728,000, or 25·4 per 1,000, but in November, 1887, the number was 740,000, or 26·2; so that within a year pauperism has decreased one per thousand. And it must be remembered that though these numbers seem large, about 600,000 are women and children. The condition of pauperism throughout England and Wales is now this, that at no time during the period over which the Returns extend—at no time during the past 30 years—has there been so little pauperism throughout the country as at present. A similar decrease of one per 1,000 has taken place in the Metropolis during the past year, and so far as that goes it shows that the poverty of the country is less now than a year ago, and that many people who otherwise would have come on the Poor Law are now obtaining employment where they did not obtain it before. Upon that point, I may say that I know that at one time there was a considerable amount of doubt as to whether or not the resources of the Metropolitan Boards of Guardians were sufficient to cope with the distress that existed, but that matter has been inquired into by a Committee whose Report sets the doubt at rest, and that Report also bears out the conclusions I have drawn from the pauper returns. I say, it may be concluded that so great a fall in the number of paupers is chiefly due to the improved condition of the working classes generally. The time at our disposal is so short that it has not been possible for me to ask the House to permit me to go into all the details advanced by hon. Gentlemen who preceded me. All I desire to say is that, so far as our information goes, the position of the working classes is considerably better now than for many years past; there is more employment and less distress, and we hope that state of things will continue. But I do not say that there is not great distress, and I do not say that there are not many matters which ought properly to receive the consideration of the Government on so important a question as this. But I must point out to the House and to hon. Gentlemen that at the present time there are no less than three Committees investigating various phases of this question—namely, the Sweating Committee, the Importation of Foreign Paupers Committee, and the Poor Law Committee. All these are investigating different points connected with the condition of the working classes and the unemployed in this country. It will be the duty of the Government to weigh well any reports and recommendations these Committees may make. But while that is so, and while there is still much that may be done in the way of remedial legislation, the proposals of the hon. Member who has moved the Amendment, so far from improving, would rather make matters worse. I give the hon. Member credit for the motive which has induced him to bring forward the Motion. We all sympathize with the object he has in view, but I ask the House to dissent from the Amendment. I trust the House will assist the Government in bringing the debate to a conclusion, so that our time may be given to the important business which is before us.

*Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): Considering that the House has now been discussing Her Majesty's gracious Speech for nearly a fortnight, it is with great reluctance that I intervene in this debate for a few moments. I wish to say, however, that I do not consider that this is the most opportune moment for raising a question of such importance, and so far-reaching in all its issues as that we are now discussing. Speaking for myself, at the opening of Parliament I should be prepared to challenge, if necessary, the policy of the Government by a single Amendment, and if defeated on that Amendment I should allow the Address to pass. I think it is a very unsatisfactory state of things to be debating the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne for nearly a fortnight without making any satisfactory progress with the business of the country. No doubt it is extremely difficult for persons in the position which I have the honour to hold, representing as I do a working class constituency, to remain silent when questions such as that now under discussion are sprung upon the House. If we remain silent it may be assumed in certain quarters that we are out of sympathy with those whom we are sent here directly to represent. Well, Sir; I will yield to no man in the depth of the sympathy which I entertain towards the working classes, and the desire which

I feel to alleviate their position at every possible point. For more than 20 years now, the small influence that I have been able to wield has been given to improve the condition of my fellows, and I should be unfaithful to the trust that is reposed in me if I were not to express sympathy on every possible occasion with the class to whom I have the honour to belong. But, Sir, what we want is not a mere expression of sympathy from the Government. That, I am very glad to say, we have already received from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, and I should not for one moment think that he was insincere in his expression of sympathy, either on his own part or the part of the Government. But we want something more than mere expressions of opinion. We want something tangible and definite which will tend to improve the condition of the working classes. I am not going to take up the time of the House with any attempt to prove a self-evident proposition. It will be admitted—even the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has admitted in his speech this afternoon—that there is distress existing in various quarters of the kingdom—very great distress, especially in such a district as that to which he has referred—namely, Cradley Heath. I think it would be well for the Government to consider some scheme for improving the social condition of the people at Cradley Heath. The right Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), speaking in the debate raised on the Crofters' Question, said the difficulty the Government had to face in proposing any remedial measures for the Scotch crofters lay in the fact that you have not to contend against, or fight with, economic difficulties, but are contending against the forces of nature—that you have a "less productive soil, a less genial climate than those other countries which compete with the Scottish crofter in disposing of the product of their labour." But that state of things, I would point out, does not obtain in the Cradley Heath district. There you have not to fight against any forces of nature. The trade of Cradley Heath is practically a monopoly in that branch of industry. With the permission of the House I should like to read a single sentence from the Report which has been referred to this afternoon, in which it is said—

> "That in reference to the chainmaking trade of Cradley Heath, instead of its being a declining industry, it continues to develop, and nothing has yet been done to materially supplant hand labour by machinery."

So that in that case you have not to contend against the forces of nature. But I will not enlarge upon this, seeing that we shall have an opportunity of raising the subject again when the Report of the Lords Committee dealing with sweating is presented to Parliament. Reference has been made to the shortening of the hours of labour by some legislative interference. This is an extremely difficult question — a matter which will have to be very carefully handled when it is brought forward for discussion in this House. Reference has also been made to the action of trades unions. Well, I am frank enough to admit that I am a trades unionist and have been so for a number of years, but I think that the record of trades unionists in relation to the shortening of hours is a very creditable record. For many years I have endeavoured, in my humble way, to secure the reduction of the hours of labour, but I have sought to bring it about apart from any Parliamentary interference. My own conviction is—I express it as an opinion of my own, and pledge nobody else to it—that with proper organization amongst the working classes it is possible to bring about a proper reduction of the hours of labour. But I also admit the great difficulty you have to face in branches of industry where it is not possible for workmen to combine. Take, for example, the case of the London car drivers and conductors. These men go on duty at eight o'clock in the morning, and they do not leave duty until half-past twelve at night. Their work is from morning till night for seven days in the week. They are never an hour off duty during the whole of that time except from sickness. They have no means whatever of establishing an organization; and I can see that in such a case as this and even in the case of railway servants the question is a very difficult one, and that it is a fair question for the State to consider how far it can interfere to secure the men a half or a whole holiday in

the week, or bring the hours at which these men are employed within a fair and reasonable limit. But, Sir, I have only risen for the purpose of pointing out the extreme inconvenience there is, in my opinion, in raising a discussion such as this on the Address in reply to a Speech from the Throne. I will reserve what I have to say on the social condition of the working classes to a more fitting occasion, which I am glad to think, owing to the ballot, we shall shortly have on the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst). He has been fortunate enough to secure, by means of the ballot, the first place for this discussion; and I appeal to the Government to afford us every facility on that occasion for a full and frank discussion of the terms of that Motion, and I trust that on that occasion we shall have the definite decision of the House in relation to this serious, grave, and important question.

MR. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I am very sorry to have to rise at this hour of the day; but the two hon. Members who introduced this subject took up so much of the time of the House as to render it impossible for other private Members on this side to speak earlier. I wish to take exception to the statement of the hon. Member who introduced the Amendment that English working men are so miserable that they have nothing to fear from foreign invasion. I also wish to take exception to his statement that trade is so bad that there is nothing but misery and squalour all over the country. If the hon. Member will permit me, I will ask him whether during the vacation he did as I did—that is to say, visit all the centres of industry in the country? If he did not, I will take him with me, to commence with, to South Wales. I there found that coal was reaching a famine price, and that labour was difficult to obtain. I found whole families engaged in the various industries, and the aggregate wage earned by each family was so large as to create surprise in my mind. I found the people enjoying every convenience and living in well-built cottages, but I found none of the squalor and misery depicted by the hon. Member for North-West Lanarkshire. I next visited Lancashire and Yorkshire, and found hundreds of thousands of operatives in full employment, and manufacturers waiting to enlist the services of more men if it were possible to obtain them. I found none of that misery which the hon. Member has so exaggerated, although I acknowledge that there must necessarily be some misery produced by various causes in an industrial country like ours. Next I visited the Black Country, in which Cradley Heath is situated. I know a good deal about the district and am pretty well acquainted with the necessities of the locality. But I maintain that the depression in the Black Country has been solely brought about by the unfair, one-sided Treaties of Mr. Cobden. Those Treaties have never been properly understood, and certainly free trade as now accepted would not have been entertained in the early days of the movement. If you could only alter the system of tariffs which is so unfairly pressing on the agricultural and industrial classes I am satisfied that a better state of things would be the result.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I am under the necessity of asking that the Question be now put. It will be quite impossible to go through with the business if the debate continues.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman—

*MR. SPEAKER: I am precluded by the Orders of the House from allowing the hon. Member to debate the Question.

DR. CLARK: I did not want to debate it. I only wanted to ask a question.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Motion made and Question put, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

The House divided:—Ayes 247; Noes 66: Majority 181.—(Division List No. 5).

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes 92; Noes 220: Majority 128.—(Division List No. 6).

*MR. W. H. SMITH claimed "That the Main Question be now put."

DR. CLARK: Mr. Speaker, I protest——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is out of order.

Main Question put accordingly.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): Mr. Speaker; I rise to a point of order. I beg to ask you, Sir, whether the Main Question can be put when the Closure has not been put to the House?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is in strict accordance with the Rules and Standing Orders of the House observed on previous occasions, that the further question—that is, the Main Question—may be claimed to be put at once. put forthwith.

The House divided:—Ayes 227; Noes 99:—Majority 128.—(Division List, No. 7.)

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question is "That this House resolve itself into Committee to appoint a Committee to draw up the reply to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne."

DR. CLARK: No.

*MR. SPEAKER: This is a purely supplementary Motion.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It is after half-past five.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That has nothing to do with it. It is a purely contingent Motion on what has taken place, and which is obligatory upon me under the Standing Orders of the House.

DR. CLARK: You said "the ayes have it," and I said "No."

*MR. SPEAKER: No division can be allowed, as the Motion is purely supplementary.

DR. CLARK: Then I protest against your saying "the ayes have it."

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman may protest, but he is out of order.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Under what rule has the hour been projected forward?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is in accordance with the practice of the House under the Standing Orders.

SUPPLY.

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Ordered, That the several Estimates presented during the present Session be referred to the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Jackson*).

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolved, That this House will, To-morrow, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.—(*Mr. Jackson*).

MOTIONS.

PUBLIC HOUSES, HOURS OF CLOSING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to amend "The Public Houses, Hours of Closing (Scotland) Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Mr. M'Lagan, Mr. Caldwell, and Mr. Angus Sutherland.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 148.]

PAROCHIAL BOARDS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Cameron, Bill to reform the constitution of Parochial Boards in Scotland, and the mode of electing the members of such Boards, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Mr. Preston Bruce, Mr. Shiress Will, and Dr. Farquharson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 149.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

MR. A. ELLIOT (Roxburgh): I should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it will not be possible to find some occasion more suitable than the Debate on the Address, to discuss the question to which the Amendment of the hon. Member (Dr. Clark) has relation.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope sincerely that another and a much more suitable opportunity will be found for discussing the question to which the hon. Gentleman has referred. I think

that what has occurred in connection with the Address on the present occasion is an evidence, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian himself referred to in strong language, of the extreme inconvenience of attempting to deal with questions of great importance simply on Amendments to the Address. It is obvious that a sufficient and proper opportunity is not afforded by an attempt to graft on the Address Amendments dealing with these Questions—opportunities which they could have by discussing Amendments on substantive Motions or on Bills, and which they are now entirely deprived of. I trust opportunity will be found, so far as the Government is concerned, and there will be no hesitation whatever in giving full consideration to the very important question involved in the Amendment of the hon. Member.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman, now that the Debate on the Address is completed, can name a day for the discussion of the question of Perpetual Pensions for which I have been promised a day?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am under an obligation to the hon. Gentleman to name a day for that purpose, but he is aware that we are under statutory compulsion to proceed with Supply so as to obtain the supplies necessary for the purposes of the coming year, and voting the Supplementary Estimates before a given day in March, the 10th or 19th. We must ask the House to consider the financial provisions for the services of the country, and so soon as that is accomplished, I will endeavour to meet my obligation to the hon. Gentleman.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries): Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman will give facilities for the discussion of these matters, which have been excluded by the Closure, or are his remarks merely the expression of a benevolent wish?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It must be obvious that I cannot undertake to give facilities to hon. Gentlemen. If I were to begin at the commencement of the Session to undertake to give facilities for the discussion of questions of the greatest importance, I should find myself in the position either of inability to carry on the work and duties of the Government, or meeting the obligations which I had undertaken. The hon. and learned Member is aware that there are certain days at the disposal of private Members of this House, and there are certain Bills on the Paper which will give an opportunity for the discussion of Questions of this character, and certain Votes of the Estimates which will also afford an opportunity of which I have no doubt hon. Members will avail themselves.

DR. CLARK: It is a fact that there are 670 Members of this House, of whom 70 are Scotch Members, and what chance have 70 against 600, in a ballot, of raising the question of Home Rule for Scotland?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Member is an exceedingly intelligent, ingenious, and active Member of Parliament, and if he will refer to the number of times he spoke last autumn Session, he will find that had the other 69 Scotch Members occupied the same amount of time, we must have been exclusively occupied with Scotch questions during the whole of the Autumn Session. I cannot, therefore, think that the hon. Member has any great grievance; but I can assure him that the interests of Scotland will have the fullest consideration so far as the Government are concerned.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Mr. Speaker, comments have been made of the most invidious character by the President of the Local Government Board as to the length of time which, in the exercise of our duty, my hon. Friend (Mr. Graham) and I occupied in this House. The right hon. Gentleman had the assurance and audacity to bring a charge of obstruction against us, and it is only fair that I should say one or two words of defence against these charges. The right hon. Gentleman insinuated, at any rate, that we had been given to understand that the debate on the Address would come to a conclusion this afternoon. No such information came to my ears, and even if it had, it would not have affected my mind in the least. The right hon. Gentleman has just been talking about days occupied by private Members. Why, Mr. Speaker, we had two days the week before last on general subjects.

It being Six of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 11.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 15.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 7th March, 1889.

The Lord Clarina, Took the Oath.

LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT (LIGHT) RAILWAY BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR WAR (Lord HARRIS): I will state to your Lordships briefly the ground on which it has been thought necessary to take the somewhat unusual course with regard to a Private Bill of opposing its Second Reading. The course is unusual for this reason—that, as a rule, when the Government thinks it necessary to oppose a Bill on the ground that it would interfere with the national defences, the promoters withdraw it. On this occasion there was no intimation of intention to withdraw the Bill, and the Secretary of State and his military advisers considered that this line, as proposed in the Bill, would be a standing menace to the Gosport Forts, and, therefore, felt bound to oppose it. I am happy to say that clauses have been agreed to which, to a great extent, remove these military objections; but the Secretary of State also agrees to an adjournment on the understanding that consideration will be given to the possibility of the line taking another route. It is not necessary now to state what the direction is, but, if your Lordships look at the map which has been circulated, it is obvious that it will be possible to construct a line which will reach Fareham by such a route that the danger I have indicated will be obviated.

Second Reading put off to Thursday, the 14th inst.

SERVIA—THE ABDICATION OF KING MILAN.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, as I see my noble Friend the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary in his place, I would ask permission to put to him a question on a matter of considerable public interest, and of which I have given him private notice. We have been startled within the last twenty-four hours by the news of what has occurred in Servia—a very strange and dramatic proceeding. I think that probably my noble Friend will not really be in a position to give this House any very detailed information on the subject, looking to the very recent character of the events. At the same time, it is a case where, both as Foreign Secretary and as Prime Minister, he may be in a position to tell us something which will be of advantage. I look upon this matter as one of importance, not that Servia in herself is an important country, and not that the past career of the Sovereign of that country has been a very distinguished one, but, as my noble Friend knows well, she is the centre, we may say, of Eastern Europe; she is the country which is a nucleus of political ambition and intrigue; and it is hardly possible that anything that occurs there will not, at a moment like this, react, and possibly react upon the stability of the whole European fabric. For these reasons I think it would be very satisfactory that my noble Friend

should give us any information, however slight, on this serious and important question.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I understand the desire of my noble Friend, and I should be very glad to give him any information if I had any. But the only knowledge I have is that which is possessed by all your Lordships. It is not a subject upon which, in the absence of facts, I could allow myself to satisfy my noble Friend by speculation, and I can give him very little explanation of what has occurred. I can only say that, as far as I can judge, it belongs rather to the domain of domestic character than to that of political change.

IRELAND—PROCEEDINGS OF THE CORK TOWN COUNCIL.

THE DUKE OF ST. ALBANS, in rising to call attention to the payment of car hire, printing, and posting bills calling a meeting to protest against Mr. O'Brien's prison treatment, out of public rates, by the Cork Town Council on the 8th February, and to inquire whether such a proceeding was legal, and, if not, whether any means exist to prevent such an illegal expenditure of public money, and whether the Law Officers of the Crown are prepared to put the remedy in force, said: My Lords, I hope I may not be considered unduly pressing in drawing your Lordships' attention to this matter. I would have brought it forward at an earlier period of our proceedings, but that I fell into an error which may be excusable—namely, that I thought the matter to which the question refers would be rectified on the Government audit. It seems however, that the cities of Cork and Waterford and the town of Kilkenny are for some reason exempt from any legal or Government audit of their municipal accounts. True, an appeal is allowed to the Irish Court of Queen's Bench, but in the present state of Ireland it is obvious that no private individual would incur the odium and expense of such an appeal. I think, therefore, that in justice to the ratepayers and in the interests of those who wish that public bodies in Ireland should properly perform their duties, the Government may fairly be asked to express their opinion on this case, and to say whether there are any means in their power by which this illegal application of public rates can be rectified.

LORD FITZ GERALD: My Lords, The subject which has been brought to our attention by the noble Lord is very wide and very important, and deserves serious consideration. This act of the Cork Town Council, in applying the funds of the ratepayers to purposes for which they were not applicable, is an act done in open defiance and contempt of the law. The order made by the corporation was illegal, and the parties who made the order would be personally responsible for the money illegally applied. It is necessary that such practices should not be allowed to continue with impunity. Any ratepayer injured by the Act can go to the Court of Queen's Bench and ask for an order quashing the order of the Town Council by summary process, under the Municipal Corporation Act. But there are great difficulties in the way. The process is slow and expensive, and it is impossible to conceal the fact that the ratepayer who entered upon it would be subject to all the terrors of exclusive dealing. The Government has in every county in Ireland a Crown Prosecutor, and surely the Crown Prosecutor could, at the suit of any ratepayer, bring up the illegal order and have it quashed. If that is not done, the only alternative is for the Government to repeal the statutory powers by which the City of Cork, among others, is exempted from the Government audit. Then the Government Auditor can determine whether the expenditure is legal or not, and if it is held to be illegal, and he refuses to pass the accounts, the money would have to be refunded by those who had illegally expended it.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): I have just been put in possession of the answer sent by the Local Government Board in Ireland to a request for the information necessary to give a reply to the Question of my noble Friend, and I think I cannot do better than read it—

"The Local Government Board have no information on the matter referred to. The Board have no power over the expenditure of the Cork Town Council, and the Corporation accounts are not audited by auditors of the Board, but by auditors appointed by the burgesses under Section 70 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1840. Under Section 23 of the

Cork Improvement Act, 1852, any person interested in the accounts, either as a creditor or a ratepayer, may object to any part of the accounts, and the auditors may make such abatements as to them shall seem just, subject to an appeal to the Recorder by a certain number of the Council. It appears, therefore, that any ratepayer aggrieved by the expenditure referred to in the question may object thereto at the audit."

That is all the information which I have at present; but I have no doubt the matter will be further inquired into.

FIREARMS.

Information as to what laws are in force in the various States of Europe with regard to the carrying of firearms by private persons in populous places—Address for.—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

NAVAL DEFENCE.—QUESTION.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, in rising to ask what opportunity will be given to this House for considering the proposals which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, are necessary for "an increase in the precautions which have hitherto been taken for the safety of our shores and our commerce," said: My Lords, I do not know that the Question which I rise to ask Her Majesty's Government may not be somewhat unusual; but, at the same time, it certainly is not singular, and, even if it be unusual, I venture to think that the circumstances that lead to it are also unusual. Your Lordships will well remember that there is a paragraph in the Speech from the Throne of very great—I might almost say supreme—importance; I mean that paragraph which alluded to the defensive condition of the Empire. In that paragraph Parliament was informed that, in view of the potential strength for offence of other European countries, the defensive strength of the Empire was insufficient. My Lords, I do not think it is possible to conceive an announcement of much greater importance than that. In some ways it is more important than if Parliament had been told that an increase in Her Majesty's forces was required either because war was imminent or to protect British interests in some distant portions of the globe; because what we are told is that our own shores, the integrity of these islands—the heart of the Empire—and the safety of our commerce, which is the blood and the life of the Empire, are not secure against the ordinary vicissitudes of war. And more than that even—that the defensive condition of the Empire is not such as can be considered satisfactory in view of our position and our circumstances even in a time of profound peace. My Lords, I apprehend that whatever the proposals of Her Majesty's Government are, they will be proposals of a permanent character; that is to say, I presume that the paragraph in the Queen's Speech announces that Her Majesty's Government have arrived at a new estimate of the defensive requirements of the Empire; and that, therefore, whatever the proposals may be, whether they affect the Army or Navy, or both, or whether they include the armament of the Coaling Stations, and so on, they will be of a permanent character. Now, it appears to me that in a case of that kind it will be a great misfortune if your Lordships' House have not ample opportunity of expressing its opinion. I do not know, of course, in what shape the proposals of Her Majesty's Government will be made in another place; but I should imagine that they will come before this House in one of two ways—either in the Appropriation Bill on the last day of the Session, which I need hardly say would give this House no opportunity whatever for discussing this matter, or they will come before the House in the shape of a Money Bill. Of course, the right of this House to deal with a Money Bill is not disputed, but your Lordships I am sure will agree with me that it is the universal practice of this House not to reject or amend Money Bills unless in matters of the most supreme and vital importance; and, therefore, I should be right in saying that this question of the defence of the Empire and of the adequacy or inadequacy of the proposals of the Government could not be discussed by this House in a proper manner on a Money Bill. I cannot of my own recollection go very far back, but I remember two cases somewhat similar to this. I remember when a Vote for six millions was asked for; and on that occasion the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Argyll) asked a Question somewhat similar to mine; that is to say, he asked whether a statement would be made

by the Government in this House, or something to that effect. The then Prime Minister (Lord Beaconsfield) said that the ordinary and proper course was to wait until the statement had been made in the other House; and the result was, that when the Bill came up to this House there was no discussion upon it at all. I think the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) said at the time that after the Vote of the House of Commons he would advise this House not to discuss the Bill. But, my Lords, the case is not entirely on all fours with the present, because at that time the causes which made the Vote of six millions necessary were perfectly well known to Parliament and to the country. The situation which involved that Vote had been debated over and over again in this House, and there had been Ministerial statements made about it; and in consequence the Vote was merely the carrying into effect of decisions which had been come to by both Houses of Parliament. Then, my Lords, I remember also the occasion when a much larger Vote was asked for by Mr. Gladstone, the Vote for 11 millions. On that occasion the noble Earl (Lord Carnarvon) asked whether a statement would be made in this House before any statement was made in the other House of Parliament, and the noble Earl opposite (Lord Granville) replied that he would make a simultaneous statement, and that was the course which was adopted. But in that case also, my Lords, this House knew perfectly well the reasons why the Vote for 11 millions was asked for. We had had it debated; we knew all about the Penjdeh incident, and had had frequent debates about the operations in the Soudan; so that the House had practically expressed its opinion, and there was no very urgent necessity for any further debate or any further expression of opinion upon the Vote of Credit itself. But in the present case we are in almost complete ignorance as to the necessity for these additional precautions which are to be placed before Parliament, and we are in absolute ignorance as to what the proposals of the Government are to consist of. We have had no discussions—no full discussions at any rate—in this House as to the defensive condition of the Empire. I do not think that Parliament has any full information as to the Report of the Royal Commission that was appointed to inquire into the subject. I do not think we have any knowledge in this House of what has been done with the £2,900,000 that were voted for the defence of the Empire. Therefore, my Lords, it appears to me that on the present occasion there is great necessity for a full debate and understanding of this matter. I venture to say that this question of the defence of the Empire is one with which your Lordships' House is pre-eminently capable of dealing. It is often said that one of the great functions of this House is to deal with large Imperial questions. An immense number of Members of this House have served in Her Majesty's forces—a considerable number in the Army and a considerable number in the Navy. There is the noble Earl to whom I have already alluded (Lord Carnarvon) and other noble Lords who sat on the Commission, and a great many of your Lordships have on various occasions occupied places of great importance, that would render their opinion on a subject of this kind of the greatest value to the country. It would be matter of regret for this House itself if it had not an opportunity of expressing its opinion on such a subject. That, perhaps, is comparatively a small matter, but it would be a matter for the very deepest regret if the country should be deprived of the advice and opinion of this House on a question about which it is so well qualified to judge. If I am mistaken in the notion that there will be no ample opportunity for this House to express an opinion, I can only apologize for taking up your Lordships' time, but I do not myself see how it can be done. I sincerely hope that some opportunity will be given us to discuss this question of the defence of the Empire, and the adequacy or inadequacy of the proposals that Her Majesty's Government intend to make, and that that opportunity will be given at such time and in such a manner that the opinion and decision of this House, whatever it may be, may have some practical effect upon the issue in hand. My Lords, I wish to guard myself by suggesting that I not only do not disapprove in the smallest degree of what Her Majesty's Government have said in the Queen's Speech; on the contrary, I approve of it. I think it is a matter on

which the country may congratulate itself that Her Majesty's Government understand the situation, and that they have the courage to grapple with it, and have not hesitated to come forward and tell the people of this country that the defence of the Empire is inadequate, and to ask for money for the purpose of making it adequate, and I have not the faintest doubt in the world that the people of this country will back up Her Majesty's Government in anything that they do in that way, provided always that they feel sure that the proposals are sufficient, that the work is to be thoroughly done, and that the money voted is to be laid out to the best and greatest advantage. My Lords, as I said before, if I have troubled your Lordships unnecessarily in this matter, I am sorry for it, but at the same time, as I think it is only right that this House should have a proper opportunity of discharging and expressing its opinion on this point, I put the Question on the paper which I now beg to ask the noble Lord at the head of the Government.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I think my noble Friend, in reading the debates of the other House, has allowed himself to be affected by the language which naturally prevails there. We know that in the other House of Parliament Members are anxious to obtain opportunities for discussing various public questions, and the reason of that anxiety is that the time of the other House is all taken beforehand, either by the Government or by private Members. But I do not think that a noble Lord, even of the most despairing frame of mind, need be at all fearful that there will be want of opportunity for discussion owing to the scarcity of time here. There is abundance of leisure, and my noble Friend is certainly not a man of that timorous order that he would shrink from bringing forward any question in which he might feel an interest. My first answer, then, is that the time of the House is abundant; that the subject is eminently congenial to your Lordships; and there is no person fitter to make the opportunity than my noble Friend. But with respect to the other portion of the noble Lord's speech, I do not quite understand what he expected us to have done. He called attention to the passage which occurred in the Queen's Speech; but I wonder whether my noble Friend has noticed that the passage is addressed to the House of Commons, and that therefore it was quite natural that the House of Commons should first give it its consideration. My noble Friend complains that he does not know what we are going to do; but does he seriously expect me to give a small rehearsal of Lord George Hamilton's speech this evening? Does he really expect that I should make here the very statement which the First Lord is probably giving in the other House at this very moment? I think I must refer my noble Friend to the ordinary sources of information to-morrow morning, when he will receive ample information. With respect to the suggestion that there has not been any discussion in this House on the subject of the defences of the Empire, I think that the memory of my noble Friend must have betrayed him. I remember three nights last Session on which the subject occupied a very prominent position in our debates, and on one of them, when Lord Wolseley spoke, I do not remember ever seeing the House, either on the Benches or in the Galleries, so full as it was on that occasion. I am sure the subject was very fully debated on that occasion, and it received great attention from various Members of your Lordships' House. I do not in the least doubt that an opportunity can be found for my noble Friend, if he wants one, but I may add that I believe that the proposals of Lord George Hamilton will take the shape of a Bill, which will not be purely a Money Bill. That Bill will come up here, and, according to all Parliamentary precedent, will be subject to as much discussion and criticism, except on the mere point of money, as any measure which is introduced to this House.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 7th March, 1889.

COMMONS.

Ordered:—"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider every Report made by the

Land Commissioners of England, certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the enclosure or regulation of a Common, and presented to the House during the last or present Sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the confirmation of such Order.

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power, in respect of each such Provisional Order, to inquire and Report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament: and, if so, whether with or without modification, and, in the event of their being of opinion that the same should not be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly with a view to such Provisional Order being remitted to the Land Commissioners.

"That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members, Seven to be nominated by the House and Five by the Committee of Selection.

"That Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Elton, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Mr. Richard Power, and Mr. Wroughton be Members of the said Committee.

"Power to send for persons, papers, and records.

"Five to be the quorum."—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

QUESTIONS.

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IRISH LACE.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether repeated representations have lately been made by Convent Lace Schools and Schools of Art in Ireland as to the advantages of a regular continuance of Mr. Alan Cole's lectures and instructions upon designs for Irish lace; whether Mr. Cole has been, or will be, directed to renew his visits and lectures to those schools and convents in March and October of the present year; and, whether similar appeals have been made by convents and schools of art in Ireland for the renewal of Mrs. Power Lalor's inspection of the materials and methods of making the laces in Ireland?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I understand that some representations of the character referred to in the first paragraph of the hon. Member's Question have been received by the Irish Government, and I have seen testimony from other quarters as to the good work that has been effected by Mr. Alan Cole's visits. Some provision has been made for continuing these visits, but I am not aware that any dates have been fixed for them. The convenience of the Science and Art Department, to which Mr. Cole is attached, will have to be considered as well as the question of expense. So far as I know, no applications have been made by convents and schools of art for the renewal of Mrs. Power Lalor's inspection.

LAND TAX REVENUE.

COLONEL DAWNAY (York, N. R., Thirsk) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that it is usual for the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to hand over the balance, so long as it does not exceed £5, over and above the amount due to the Revenue for Land Tax to the collector, as a perquisite, in addition to the 3d. in the pound he is paid for collecting this tax; and, whether he will take steps in the future that the balance should be carried forward to meet future charges?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The power to make the allowance referred to is in the hands of the Land Tax Commissioners. I am precluded from making any alteration with regard to this allowance, as it is made by Statute (section 114 of 43 and 44 Vic., c. 17).

COLONEL DAWNAY: I beg to give notice that on the first opportunity I will call the attention of the House to this subject.

DERRY GAOL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Rev. Daniel Stephens, an untried prisoner detained on remand in Derry Gaol, asked to have his dinner supplied from Roddy's Hotel on his arrival after his long journey from Falcarragh to Derry; whether the order was carried out by the hotel keeper, and the dinner duly received by a warder in the prison; whether the dinner was shortly afterwards returned by order of the Governor, or other superior official acting for him; and, whether he can state the grounds on which this refusal was based?

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The General Prisons Board report that it is the case that the Governor of Londonderry Prison refused to allow the dinner sent from the hotel named to be supplied on the occasion in ques-

tion. The further supply of provisions from this hotel had been prohibited by the Visiting Committee in August last, in the case of the Rev. James McFadden, in consequence of there having been collusion between him and those sent with his meals from the hotel, whereby he was enabled to evade the Prison Rules in sending out surreptitiously communications from the Prison. The Governor in the exercise of his discretion extended the prohibition to this case.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government approve of the action of the Governor, and whether they will give the hotel keeper any opportunity of rebutting the charge made against him, which I understand that the hotel keeper indignantly denies? I would also like to know what course will be pursued in similar cases hereafter?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no doubt that the Governor will exercise the discretion given to him.

MR. T. M. HEALY intimated that he would call attention to the matter upon the Estimates.

THE POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

MR. HUBBARD (Bucks, N.) asked the Postmaster General if his attention has been drawn to the following facts: that a man, 21 years old next birthday, can assure £10 at his death in the Post Office Savings Bank, by an annual premium of 4s. 2d., that the Prudential Assurance Company only offer to a man, 21 years old next birthday, £8 9s. at death, in return for a weekly premium of 1d.; that, despite the apparent advantage to insurers at this age, and at any age, of an insurance in the Post Office, only 5,859 contracts for £447,300, payable at death, "entered into by Her Majesty's Postmaster General," were in existence on December 31st, 1887, while the Prudential Assurance Company (Industrial Branch) acknowledged 6,904,000 policies for £64,200,000, as existing on December 31st, 1886; whether he will consider the best means of helping the saving public to avail themselves more of the larger benefits offered by Her Majesty's Government; and, whether, to assist them, he would re-issue a Departmental handbook on the lines of "The Post Office Aids to Thrift," published by Mr. Fawcett in 1881?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): Without making myself responsible for the accuracy of all the figures quoted by my hon. Friend, I would point out that the Post Office has brought its system of insurance and annuity into almost every village in the Kingdom, and has spared no means at its disposal of making known the advantages which it offers; and it rests with the public to avail itself of them. I can only hope that the attention which the hon. Member is now calling to the matter will promote the object which he has in view—an object with which I entirely sympathize. The Post Office handbook, incorporating the essential points contained in Mr. Fawcett's edition, entitled, "The Post Office Aids to Thrift," is published every six months, and may be obtained at any post office. I shall, however, be glad to consult the Treasury as to the practicability of circulating further information on this most important subject.

THE EDLINGHAM BURGLARY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he proposes to make any further inquiry into the Edlingham burglary case; whether the prosecutors in the late trial of the policemen were instructed to produce all the evidence which could throw any light on the case; and, if so, why some important witnesses were not examined, especially the Reverend Mr. Perry and Mr. Percy, the principal actors in the proceedings by which the case was re-opened, and who were present ready and willing to give evidence; whether the money to give compensation to Murphy and Brannagan has been voted, or when, or in what shape, Parliament will be asked to vote it; and, whether, in case there is to be no further inquiry, he will, before asking for the money, produce to the House a Copy of the proceedings on the inquiry by an agent of his own, or other evidence, by which he was satisfied of the innocence of the two men, and of their right to compensation?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have

carefully considered this intricate and difficult case, and I am unable to see that any further inquiry can be made which will throw more light upon it, or elicit any new facts. The Director of Public Prosecutions was requested to produce at the late trial all the evidence that could be given. It was necessarily left to the counsel conducting the prosecution what particular witnesses should be called. Mr. Perry and Mr. Percy were not called, because the statements made to them by Edgell or Richardson were not evidence against the constables then on trial; but they were subpœnaed by the prosecution in order to insure their attendance in case the defendants wished to examine them. Mr. Perry was called as a witness before the magistrate in the case against Edgell and Richardson, and there was then an opportunity of cross-examining him. The compensation lodged with trustees for Brannagan and Murphy has been paid from the Civil Contingencies Fund, and Parliament will be asked to vote it in the Supplementary Estimate for the repayment of advances from that fund. I do not propose to produce to the House a copy of the proceedings and report of the Treasury Solicitor. That is a document containing a great deal of confidential matter; and it is impossible for the House to form a judicial opinion upon a mass of evidence of an intricate character. But I may say that I did not act on that report, and took no step for the pardon of Brannagan and Murphy, or for compensating them, until Edgell and Richardson had not only confessed their guilt after warning that they would be punished, but had been sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I want to know whether the counsel for the prosecution were instructed merely to produce such evidence as was likely to secure a conviction, or to produce all the evidence that would throw light on the case; and, if so, why the prosecution did not call Mr. Perry and Mr. Percy, and any evidence that might affect the credibility of Edgell and Richardson?

*MR. MATTHEWS: I have already stated that the prosecution was instructed to lay the whole of the case, both for and against the policemen, before the Court.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to give notice that when the Vote for Compensation comes before the House, I will call attention to the unsatisfactory position of this matter, the extreme barbarity of the English law, and the great difficulty of eliciting the truth.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it true that the prosecution was conducted by a new Conservative Member of this House?

*MR. MATTHEWS: The prosecution was entrusted to a gentleman who has a large practice before the tribunal by which it was tried. The choice was not in any way made by the Government, but by the Director of Public Prosecutions on his own responsibility.

SMALL ARMS—MAJOR HARSTON'S INVENTION.

CAPTAIN SELWYN (Cambridge, Wisbeach) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the estimated cost of converting the Martini-Henry into a repeating rifle is about 8s. at the Government Factory and 12s. 6d. by contract; and, whether, in view of the great economy which Major Harston's invention might produce, and in order to secure fair play to inventors, he will lay upon the Table of the House the Report of the Small Arms Committee on this invention?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The conversion of the Martini into a repeating rifle could be made in the Government factory at a cost of 16s. per arm. But it is represented to me that this invention, while remarkable for its ingenuity, is altogether unfit for service. The Reports of the Small Arms Committee are confidential documents, which, I am afraid, I cannot undertake to produce.

CAPTAIN SELWYN: Is the right hon. Gentleman able to say when this unfortunate officer is likely to receive payment for his invention?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The question of the payment of Major Harston is under consideration.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to fulfil the promise given to me by the Financial Secretary, that Members of this House should see the Report of the Small Arms Committee to the War Office?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I do not understand that my hon. Friend made such a promise. I certainly cannot undertake to produce a confidential document.

NAVAL GUNS.

MR. HANBURY asked the First Lord of the Admiralty at what dates the *Howe*, *Camperdown*, *Anson*, *Undaunted*, *Australia*, *Immortalité*, *Narcissus*, and *Galatea*, which would have been completed by 1st December, 1888, if their guns had been delivered (Parliamentary Paper, 20th December, 1888) were or could have been ready for their guns; when the guns in each case had been originally promised which are "now promised" for May and June of this whether the guns quoted in the Return as "now promised" for delivery to the *Anson*, *Undaunted*, and *Immortalité* in February, 1889, were so delivered; what other vessels are being delayed in completion by the non-delivery of their guns, or are ready and waiting for them; and whether the Admiralty has yet received from the War Office a clear statement of (1) how the money voted (say) during the last six years for naval ordnance has been expended; and (2) what supply of naval ordnance the War Office has in hand?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The four ships referred to in the first part of the Question are now ready for their guns. These are to be delivered on board by April 30 for the *Victoria*, the end of May for the *Camperdown*, by the end of June for the *Sans Pareil* and *Howe*. The *Trafalgar* will be ready for her guns by June next, which are to be delivered by the end of August. It is intended to re-arm the *Thunderer* this year and the *Rupert* next year; it is anticipated that the guns will be delivered by the time the ships are ready for them. With reference to the guns for the belted cruisers, those for the *Undaunted* and *Immortalité* are expected at the end of this month, those for the *Australia* at the end of May, and for the *Narcissus* at the end of June. Those for the *Galatea* and *Aurora* are expected in November, but there are at Chatham 9·2-inch guns of an earlier pattern which would be available in an emergency. The *Medea* and *Medusa* are now ready for their guns, which it is expected will be delivered by April 1 and May 15 respectively. It is anticipated that the guns for the *Magicienne* and *Melpomene* will be delivered by the time that the ships are ready for them. The Admiralty have not received from the War Office a complete statement of money spent for naval service, as the War Office state that it is impossible to furnish such a statement, no separate accounts having been kept of expenditure on naval ordnance stores as distinguished from those for land service. Separate store ledgers were, however, opened by the War Office, 1887-88, for naval ordnance, and a statement was last year furnished to the Admiralty by the War Office, showing the stock of naval ordnance stores, on April 1, 1888, made up partly of stores which the War Office transferred from the general existing stock to the naval service, and partly of stores which were expressly made or purchased for the Navy during the year 1887-8, when the separate accounts for the Navy were first started. The details of the division of the general existing stock between sea and land service as made by the War Office is now the subject of inquiry and consideration between the two Departments.

SAMOA.

MR. WILLIAM M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government had any information as to a truce alleged to have been concluded between the German Consul and Mataafa, King of Samoa; whether they have any information as to the present place of detention of the ex-King Malietoa; and whether they have ever asked from the German Government any undertaking that he should be well treated while detained by them?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): We have no information of the conclusion of a truce between the German Consul in Samoa and the Chief Mataafa. We have heard that the ex-King Malietoa has been conveyed to the Marshall Islands. Her Majesty's Government have never asked the German Government that Malietoa should be well treated while detained by them. We have no reason to doubt his fair treatment, but we have no special right to interfere on his behalf. We have heard indirectly that while in Germany he received very handsome entertainment.

RATHDRUM PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention had been drawn to a case, decided at Rathdrum Petty Sessions on Thursday last, which arose from some road scrapings claimed, on the one hand by a man named Edward Pierce, under the authority of the road contractor, and on the other by Mr. W. F. Littledale, J.P., of Whaley Abbey, county Wicklow, whose son instructed William Hamilton, an emergency man, to draw the stuff into the farmyard of a holding from which the tenant had been evicted; whether it is true that, when the dispute arose, Hamilton went back to his house, and returned with a revolver, which he, as sworn, presented at Pierce, threatening to blow his brains out; whether Constable Flood swore that Hamilton admitted using the threat; whether Mr. Macleod, R.M., commented on the audacity of the defendant Hamilton in drawing a revolver under the circumstances; and, whether it was true that the defendant was merely bound over in the sum of £10 to keep the peace?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I had no previous knowledge of this case, but have inquired into it, and learn that the dispute arose from the conflicting claims referred to in the Question. The question which the magistrates had to decide was whether Hamilton presented this revolver, loaded, at the complainant, whose name, I am informed, was Price, not Pierce. Had he done so this would have constituted an indictable offence. There was, however, no evidence to show that the revolver was loaded, and Hamilton's daughter contradicted the statement that it was aimed at Price. The R.M. condemned the production of arms under such circumstances. Hamilton was old and infirm, with a wooden leg. He was bound over to keep the peace, or in default one month's imprisonment.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET asked the right hon. Gentleman if there was any evidence that the revolver was not loaded?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he had given the hon. Member all the information in his possession.

ROMAN CATHOLIC SOLDIERS AT CLONMEL.

MR. THEOBALD (Essex, Romford), asked the Secretary of State for War if, on Sunday last, in the Roman Catholic Church at Clonmel, the officiating priest, Father Byrne, from the altar commanded the soldiers to remain in their seats consequent on their having received orders from Lieutenant Geoghegan to leave the building, thus commanding them by priestly influence to disobey the orders of their commanding officer; and also that, before the officer left the church, the priest publicly rebuked the said officer; and if Lieutenant Geoghegan has in consequence been placed under arrest?

MR. W. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I rise to a point of order. I want to know whether, having regard to the strict censorship exercised in respect of Questions put by hon. Members on this side of the House, a Question ought to be allowed to appear on the paper which is neither grammatical nor intelligible?

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member insinuates that partiality is shown as between one side and the other in regard to Questions he is entirely wrong, and there is no justification for such an insinuation. I am not aware of any difference being made, and I have not thought it necessary to exercise any censorship in regard to this particular question.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): On the same subject I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War, if he will communicate to the House the Report of the Commander-in-Chief in Ireland on the conduct of Lieutenant Geoghegan in a Catholic Church in Clonmel, on Sunday last, and state what has been the result?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The principle which has hitherto been acted upon in such matters was stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh, as follows, on March 29, 1881—

"There is no printed regulation on the subject, but it is manifest that officers in command of soldiers at church or chapel must be allowed to exercise some discretion as to permitting them to remain there when language is used in sermons to which soldiers would not be allowed to listen if spoken in public meeting."

I entirely adopt the principle so laid down. Applying it to the circumstances of the present case, I have read the language addressed to the congregation on the occasion in question in the Lenten Pastoral, and I am of opinion that it held up duly constituted authorities to contempt, and as such ought not to have been addressed to soldiers. The lieutenant in charge, in the exercise of his discretion, ordered the troops to withdraw. He stated further in evidence that in doing so he intended no disrespect either to the Roman Catholic Church or to the officiating priest. I cannot, therefore, condemn the exercise of the discretion vested in this officer.

MR. SEXTON: May I point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he has not answered my Question as to any Report on the subject by the Commander-in-Chief in Ireland.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I thought the hon. Gentleman knew quite well that Reports of this description are quite confidential, and are not communicated to the House.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I did not understand the right hon. Gentleman to state the facts of the case.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: That was not the question put to me.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Then I will ask the right hon. Gentleman to state himself what the facts of the case were, because the answer which he has given to us is a sort of argumentative statement upon a state of facts which is not before us. Will the right hon. Gentleman prefer to make a statement now or to-morrow?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: A statement of facts ought to be made with the utmost care in such a case, and I should prefer that notice should be given.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to lay on the Table a copy of the Lenten Pastoral which he says he has read, and which contains language that justified the order?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I will consider that question also, and will state to-morrow what course I will take.

THE WITNESSES BEFORE THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. LALOR (Queen's County, Leix) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it be true that the Lord Lieutenant has granted a free pardon to Delany, one of the men convicted of the Phœnix Park murders, and who was lately examined before the Judicial Commission; and, if so, on what date was the pardon signed; if pardoned, why is Delany retained in London in charge of the Governor of Maryborough Gaol and two warders; at whose expense are the Governor and the two warders kept in London; is it a fact that Delany, while in Mountjoy Prison, was allowed to see his wife weekly, while at the same time he was allowed tobacco and other special privileges in the way of dietary, &c.; and from what fund did the cost of this exceptional treatment come?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not true that Delany has been pardoned. He is in London by order of the Special Commission. The General Prisons Board report that there is no ground whatever for the allegation that he received any exceptional privilege or indulgence.

CANADIAN APPLES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Customs authorities at Liverpool recently seized a large consignment of Canadian apples, addressed to Messrs. L. Connolly and Co., one of the principal firms of fruit brokers in Great Britain, and refused to deliver same even on the production of the bills of lading issued at Port Hope, Ontario, for shipment per Grand Trunk Railway and Portland Maine, and thence per steamer to the port of Liverpool, until the day following that on which the fruit was sold, and then only on condition that the brand "Canadian Apples" was obliterated from the packages, with consequent injury to the commercial value of the goods; and, whether he can say if it was under the Trades Mark Act, or what other Statute the Customs authorities acted in this matter; and, if so, whether, considering the perishable nature of the goods and the necessity for prompt delivery in this trade, he will make such arrangements as will prevent the recurrence of such loss and inconvenience in future?

MR. JACKSON: The consignment in question arrived on February 26, and was detained by the Customs officers at Liverpool under Sections 16

and 3 of the Merchandize Marks Act, 1887, and with reference to Sub-section 2 of Section 10 of that Act, the Board of Customs telegraphed permission to deliver the goods on obliteration of the marks, and the goods were released from detention on February 27. On the first instance, the collector received authority from the Board to allow delivery of future importations under similar circumstances without reference to them and without obliteration of the marks.

RAILWAY BYE-LAWS.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he has had his attention called to the fact that Railway Companies continue to publish amongst their bye-laws one to the effect that any passenger travelling without a ticket, or failing or refusing to show and deliver up his ticket to any duly authorized servant of the Company when required so to do, shall be required to pay the fare from the station whence the train originally started to the end of his journey; whether this bye-law was held by the Judges of the Common Pleas Division in the London and Brighton Railway Company *v.* Watson to be "unreasonable and void"; and, whether the Board of Trade will, from time to time, so revise the bye-laws of the Railway Companies as to prevent the insertion in them, as valid, of bye-laws which have been previously held to be invalid by the Judges of the Superior Courts of Law?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS-BEACH): Yes, Sir, I believe the law is as stated by the hon. Member. The matter has been under my attention, but the question of the revision of bye-laws is a very difficult one, and looking to the pressure thrown on the Department by the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of last year, I cannot definitely undertake to say when the matter will be dealt with, but I will promise that it shall not be lost sight of.

SUB-COMMISSION COURT AT DOWNPATRICK.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if Mr. McElvaine, who acted as landlord's valuator at the Sub-Commission Court recently held at Downpatrick, is the gentleman appointed as Court valuer for County Down; and, if, in order that both sides should be represented, he will authorize the appointment of a tenant's valuer to assist the County Court Judge in the discharge of his arduous duties?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that they are not aware whether the County Court Judge of the County Down has referred any questions to Mr. McElvaine for report, pursuant to section 32 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887. The power of selection of such valuers rests with the County Court Judges, who, in making their appointments, act with a full sense of their responsibility in the matter.

THE RIFLE BRIGADE.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention to remove the place of training of the 8th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade from Carrick-on-Shannon, the head-quarters for many years; and, if so, whether he will give any reason for the change?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: This is a very small Militia battalion, and it is much below its established strength. It has, therefore, been decided, after very careful consideration, to disband it after its next training, and to absorb the County of Leitrim into the recruiting area of the 5th Battalion of the Connaught Rangers. It will train this year at Boyle, because that is the head-quarters of the latter regiment, which it is hoped that many of the Leitrim men will join.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS IN LEITRIM.

MR. HAYDEN asked the Postmaster General whether representations have been made to him on behalf of the inhabitants of Garadice, Glebe, Coromahon, Breskil, Lisloughy, Brunnreilly, and several other townlands situate between Newtowngore and Ballinamore, county Leitrim, showing the need for a post-office in the district; whether a large number of letters are daily left at a single house in the district; and whether there is any reason why the request of the inhabitants should not be acceded to?

MR. RAIKES: The facts are as stated by the hon. Member, and I have had

pleasure in sanctioning a post office at Garadice.

SCOTCH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

MR. DUFF (Banffshire) asked the Lord Advocate whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce the Local Government Bill for Scotland in time to enable the Commissioners of Supply to consider it at their statutory meeting on the 30th of April?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire) replied in the affirmative.

CAPPOQUIN PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether cases entered for hearing at Cappoquin Petty Sessions on 24th January, and requiring the attendance of two magistrates, were adjourned to 7th February, as only one magistrate attended; whether, on 7th February, such cases were again adjourned to 21st February, as only one magistrate attended; whether, on 21st February, another adjournment again took place for the same reason; what prevented the Resident Magistrate attending Cappoquin Ordinary Petty Sessions on the days in question; and whether any steps can be taken to prevent the inconveniences to professional gentlemen and their clients that follow such adjournments?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the hon. Member to defer the Question.

THE NORTH DUBLIN UNION.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that the Bank of Ireland, as treasurer of the North Dublin Union, has refused to allow the North Dublin Board of Guardians to overdraw its account to the extent of £4,000, for a limited period, on the security of the rates, although that security has been practically admitted by the Local Government Board to be ample; whether the Munster and Leinster Bank has offered to make the required advance, free of interest, on condition of the Union account being transferred to it from the Bank of Ireland; whether the Guardians resolved to transfer their account to the Munster and Leinster Bank, and whether they have been prevented from acting on this resolution by the Local Government Board; whether there is any statutable provision against such a transfer of the account of the North Dublin Board as has been suggested; and, if not, why the Local Government Board insist on dealing exclusively with the Bank of Ireland; and, since the Local Government Board have prevented the North Dublin Board of Guardians from obtaining money on good terms from the Munster and Leinster Bank, what does the Government propose to do to enable the Board to carry on its work for the relief of the poor?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is the fact that the Bank of Ireland, as treasurer of the North Dublin Union, declined to advance to the Guardians of that Union so large a sum as £4,000, but the Bank offered to allow them to overdraw their account to the amount of £2,000, and this offer the Guardians accepted on the 16th of January last. From the Guardians' minutes of proceedings on the 23rd of January it appears that the Munster and Leinster Bank offered to lend £4,000, free of interest, for three months, or until such time as moneys would come in, provided that the account of the Union was changed to that Bank. The Guardians did adopt a resolution to the effect that their account be changed to the Munster and Leinster Bank, but the Local Government Board declined to sanction such transfer, on the ground that a treasurer who refused to advance large sums of money to the Guardians could not thereby be deemed to have failed to comply with the Board's general regulations defining his duties as an officer of the Union. Besides, the Bank of Ireland during past years frequently allowed the Guardians of the North Dublin Union to overdraw their account, and in the present instance lent them a sum of £2,000, so that it could not fairly be contended that the action of the Bank towards the Guardians had been illiberal. The treasurer of a union is appointed under the 24th article of the Board's general regulations, and his tenure of office is governed by the 39th article of the same Order, which provides that every officer appointed to or holding any office under the Order shall, subject to the provisions of Article 40, continue to hold the same until he die, or resign,

or be removed by the Local Government Board. It is not the practice of the Board to allow a treasurer to be removed from office unless reasonable and sufficient grounds can be assigned for dispensing with his services; and the fact that a bank acts in that capacity does not alter the position which the treasurer of the Union occupies under the Order referred to. The Guardians have recently received £3,137 in lieu of rates on Government property, as well as a considerable amount in respect of rates collected, and it appears that last week they had a sum of £2,553 to their credit at the foot of their treasurer's account, so that they do not now want funds for the relief of the poor.

MR. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the fact that the Bank of Ireland did advance money to the Guardians of the Dublin Union until the Union agreed to transfer their account to the Munster Bank; and whether the course pursued by the Bank of Ireland has not thrown grave inconvenience upon the ratepayers?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a Question of which notice must be given.

WELSH COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the President of the Board of Trade how many members of the County Councils of Merioneth, Denbigh, Flint, and Chester respectively, will be entitled to elect on the Dee Conservancy Board, and how many the County Councils of Merioneth, Montgomery, Carnarvon, and Cardigan respectively on the Dovey Conservancy Board?

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: The County Councils named by the hon. Member will respectively appoint the same number of members as the Quarter Sessions have hitherto been entitled to appoint, the powers of the Quarter Sessions in this respect having been transferred to the County Councils. The Clerks of the Peace could state what the numbers are.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS: The Councils themselves do not know the number they are entitled to elect, and in some cases the clerks of the parishes themselves are unable to give the necessary information.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I think that the application in this matter should be made to the Clerk of the Peace.

IRELAND—COLONEL SAUNDERSON.

MR. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for War whether he had yet received from the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) the names of the leading men in the Army upon whose authority the hon. and gallant Gentleman declared, in a recent speech at Portadown, that, in a certain event, they would refuse to do their duty in maintenance of the law; and whether he would communicate the correspondence to the House?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; I have not, nor do I propose to call upon my hon. and gallant Friend to furnish me with the names of the officers in question. From the only report of my hon. and gallant Friend's speech that I have seen, it appears that his words were incorrectly quoted by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool. But, be that as it may, I do not conceive it to be my duty to ask for the names of officers who may, in private conversation, have made use of loose and hasty expressions with regard to a hypothetical case. It will be time enough for me to take notice of them when they are publicly used by the officers themselves.

MR. SEXTON: Is the House to understand that an officer in the British Army is entitled to pledge himself to violate his oath if he does it in private conversation? Has the right hon. Gentleman received any report of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's speech which the hon. and gallant Gentleman admits to be correct?

MR. E. STANHOPE: My answer to both these Questions is, no. I have seen the report in the *Irish Times*.

CULLINANE THE INFORMER.

MR. J. R. COX (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he will undertake that an officer of the Government, to be named by him, will serve a subpœna, on the part of the Irish Members, on Cullinane, the informer, to appear before the Special Commission?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It would be convenient that all requests for assistance in connection with the inquiry pending before the Royal Commission should be made in the regular

manner by the solicitors of those concerned, and not by way of Question across the floor of the House. As a matter of fact, the Irish Government are unacquainted with Cullinane's whereabouts.

MR. COX: To whom is our solicitor to apply?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Solicitors have already applied to the Government. It must be done in the usual way, by writing to the Irish Government.

MR. COX: Has Caron left the country since the opening of the Commission?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think so.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the right hon. Gentleman agree that, in the same way as reports of the evidence of Major Le Caron, the informer of the Government, were given to Mr. Houston, the secretary of the Loyal and Patriotic League, the reports of Cullinane's evidence shall be given to Mr. Schnadhorst, the secretary of the National Liberal Federation?

The Question was not answered?

MR. SEXTON: Is Cullinane now outside the jurisdiction of the Courts of the Queen; has he left this country since the Commission commenced, and where did he obtain funds to enable him to go away?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not the slightest knowledge on the subject.

SUBURBAN BURGLARIES.

MR. BIGWOOD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the increase of burglaries in the suburban districts; and if any and, if so, what further means can be taken to deter attempts of this description?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Commissioners of Police that there has been no increase in the number of burglaries in the suburban districts during the last four months; on the contrary, there have been fewer than in the corresponding periods of 1887 and 1888. The police are using their best efforts to check this class of crime; but its effectual prevention depends as much on the vigilance and care of the householders themselves as on the efforts of the police.

ARTILLERY RE-ORGANIZATION.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he intends to give effect to the proposals of Lord Harris' Artillery Committee, four members of which, including the Chairman, recommended the separation of the mounted from the dismounted branches of the Royal Regiment of Artillery?

MR. E. STANHOPE: It is difficult to state our proposals on this subject in answer to a Question, but full information will be given when the Army Estimates are brought in.

IRELAND—FATHER STEPHENS.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Rev. D. Stephens, of Falrarragh, was arrested more than a week ago on a charge of conspiracy; and whether bail was refused; and, if so, why it was refused?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the facts are substantially as stated in the Question. Bail was refused by the Magistrates, in the exercise of their discretion.

MR. GILL: But why did the Magistrates refuse Father Stephens the ordinary privileges?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know on what ground they acted.

PALLISER GUNS.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many guns have been converted on the Palliser system; and what is the approximate gross weight of shot or shell which have been cast on the Palliser system?

MR. E. STANHOPE: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman will move for a Return, I will grant it.

THE BARROW DRAINAGE.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received the copy of a resolution passed by what is described as a large and representative meeting of the people of Portarlington, disapproving of a scheme proposed by the Government for the drainage of the Barrow by means of embankments, and

advocating the adoption of the plan embodied in the Report of Lord Castletown's Commission, which recommended the widening and deepening of the bed of the river and the removal of obstructions; and whether, after this expression of local opinion, the Government still intend to persevere with their scheme?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; and the proposals of the Government will be communicated to the memorialists. The hon. Member may be able to get information from the engineer, Mr. Gamble.

OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS.

Mr. JAMES ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Mr. H. Evans, the writer of the article in the *Contemporary Review* on "The London County Council and the Police," is Mr. H. K. Evans, one of the first-class clerks in the Receivers' Office; and, if he is the same gentleman, does he come within the Rule made in 1879, by which officers attached to a Department were precluded from publishing works relating to the Department without permission, and had he obtained the necessary permission?

MR. MATTHEWS: Mr. H. Evans was formerly employed in the Receivers' Office, but retired in June last, and therefore he is no longer amenable to the rules.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: Had he access to the official documents and to the statistics used in this House on the Metropolitan Police Vote last year by my hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch?

MR. MATTHEWS: He had access to no official documents.

THE AGHABOY POST OFFICE.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has yet filled the recently vacated office of Sub-Postmaster of Aghaboy, county Monaghan; and, whether he will consult local feeling in the matter, and defer making the appointment until he can have the advantage of the opinion of the majority of the people of the district as to the claims and fitness of the person most acceptable to them for the office to guide him in making the appointment?

MR. RAIKES: The vacancy for a Sub-Postmaster at Aghaboy has not yet been officially reported to me. I can, therefore, only assure the hon. Member that, when it is so reported, I shall select for appointment the candidate whom I may ascertain to be best qualified to perform the duties of the office to the satisfaction of the Department and the public generally.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION —THE CONVICT NALLY.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many visits have been made by any person or persons on behalf of the *Times* to P. W. Nally, during his detention at Millbank Prison, from 20th November, 1888, to this date; did one or more of the visits take place in the presence and in the hearing of a warder or warders; at what dates were the visits made; has the application of a friend of P. W. Nally's family for a visit been refused, on the ground that the prisoner had forfeited his right to a visit by misconduct; what misconduct is alleged against P. W. Nally, and in what prison; was it at Millbank; what is the date of the report against him; will visits from persons acting on behalf of the *Times* to P. W. Nally, and other similarly circumstanced prisoners, continue to be permitted, regardless of the wishes or without the consent of such prisoners; and, are such visits counted against the very limited number of visits due to the prisoners?

MR. MATTHEWS: The prisoner Nally has received one visit. It was in view of a warder, but not in his hearing. It took place on the 4th of February last. A visit has been refused on the ground that the Prisons Board in Ireland reported that Nally had forfeited by misconduct the right to receive a visit at present. This report was communicated from Dublin Castle to the Home Office on the 18th of January. The misconduct did not take place at Millbank, but in Ireland, and was reported to the Governor of Downpatrick Prison on the 27th of November last. Prisoners are not and will not be compelled to receive these visits if they object. Such visits are not counted against the ordinary visits due to a prisoner.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to know whether before the visit is made the pri-

soner is warned and has an opportunity of objecting?

MR. MATTHEWS: The practice is to announce the visit to the prisoner, who then has an opportunity of objection.

MR. P. O'BRIEN: Was there any conversation in the hearing of the warder?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; the practice in English prisons is to have the warder in sight, but not within hearing distance.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Governor of Downpatrick Prison in any way whatever gave P. W. Nally, being a prisoner in his charge, reason to think that if he, P. W. Nally, would give evidence before the Special Commission in support of the *Times* case, he should soon be released from prison; and, has P. W. Nally been reported for misconduct during his detention at Downpatrick Prison; if so, what was the misconduct, and the date of the report?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the allegation in the first paragraph is absolutely without foundation. The prisoner was reported for misconduct, which consisted of shouting in a loud and disorderly manner, and calculated to create a disturbance on the 19th of November last, when being conveyed to the railway station at Downpatrick. The report was made by the officer of the escort on the 27th of the same month, after his return from London.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to give notice that on the Prison Votes I will call attention to the persecution of this particular prisoner because he refused to make himself an informer for the *Times*.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison Commissioners, before giving permission to the agent of the *Times* to visit P. W. Nally in Millbank, secured the assent of the Secretary of State in this particular case; and, whether it is the rule of the Prison Commissioners to allow every solicitor who may choose to apply to visit any prisoner in Millbank; if not, what principle governed their assent in this instance; and I should also like to know whether permission to visit Nally has been refused to everyone excepting the agent to the *Times*?

MR. MATTHEWS: The permission which was refused to Nally was to receive a private visit coming under the ordinary prison rules, which he was not entitled to receive. In answer to the Question on the Paper, I have to say the assent of the Secretary of State was not asked for the visit referred to. It is the practice of the Commissioners to satisfy themselves that the applicant is a solicitor, and that the application is made *bonâ fide* for some stated business in which the prisoner is concerned, before they give their assent. They acted in accordance with this practice in the instance referred to. Nally had been brought over from Ireland under an order of the Special Commission issued at the instance of Mr. Soames, and the object of the interview sought by Mr. Soames was to take his proof.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle): Are we not to understand that the rule that the prisoner is entitled to receive a visit from a solicitor in a matter in which he is concerned means "concerned in his own defence;" and in what sense was Nally concerned with the Commission and the *Times*?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have made inquiries to-day on that very point, and I am informed that the practice has not been confined to cases in which the solicitor interviewing the prisoner was acting in his defence. I think, however, it is a matter worthy of consideration. There is a good deal to be said on both sides—whether the privilege of a visit not in the hearing of a warder may not properly be confined to cases in which what passes between the prisoner and his visitor would be privileged from being in evidence in a Court of Law. Nally was concerned in this visit, inasmuch as he was under the orders of the Court to give evidence. The person calling a witness before a Court of Justice invariably obtains beforehand information of what the witness is about to say—in other words, he takes his proof.

MR. J. MORLEY: Is there any means of ascertaining whether it is true that the agent of the *Times* on his visit produced a letter purporting to be written by Nally's brother?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have made inquiries on this subject, and the informa-

tion given to me is that the warder saw no letter produced.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): At what date did the practice first commence of the Prison Commissioners allowing solicitors in a hostile position to foist themselves on prisoners without those prisoners' wish or assent?

MR. MATTHEWS: The right hon. Gentleman is importing into my answer what I never said. If the prisoner objects, he is not compelled to receive the visit.

SIR W. HARCOURT: What opportunity had this particular prisoner accorded to him of objecting?

MR. MATTHEWS: He had the opportunity afforded him by the announcement of the visit?

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask whether the announcement that the *Times'* case would close on Tuesday was known to the right hon. Gentleman before he made the announcement that the rule was to be changed; and whether that altered rule is to be applied to the "defence" of hon. Members of this House?

MR. MATTHEWS: I know nothing about the closing of the *Times'* case, and I have not made any announcement that the rule would be altered.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I should like to ask how the right hon. Gentleman himself construes the rule that any solicitor is entitled to visit a prisoner.

MR. MATTHEWS: There is no "rule" on the subject. I have said so more than once. It has been the practice of the Prison Commissioners for many years. That practice, although it is liable to abuse, does not appear to me to be in itself objectionable.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire if, when Nally was informed that the representative of the *Times* intended to visit him, he was also informed that he might, if he wished, refuse to see the visitor?

MR. MATTHEWS: Certainly.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: Will Nally be afforded an opportunity of proving that attempts were made to tamper with him by the Governor of Downpatrick Prison since it has been denied?

MR. MATTHEWS: When Nally appears before the Special Commission those questions can be put to him in cross-examination.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether he intends to call Nally?

The Question was not answered.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT—PROSECUTIONS IN LIMERICK.

MR. O'KEEFFE: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer the cost incurred by this country on account of recent prosecutions at Ballyneety and Castleconnell, County Limerick, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, particularizing the expenditure, as follows: the amount paid to special magistrates and police at the meetings in the first instance; the amount paid to the Law Officers who advised the prosecutions; the amount paid to policemen who came to London to serve the summonses; the amount paid to Resident Magistrates, Crown Counsel, shorthand writers, police, soldiers, and cavalry who attended the Courts until convictions were obtained?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The information asked for would require a vast amount of labour before it could be prepared, even if it could possibly be prepared. Under the circumstances I cannot give the hon. Member the information.

MR. O'KEEFFE: Then I will refer to the matter on the Estimates.

THE BAYONET CONTRACT.

MR. KENRICK (Birmingham, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what progress had been made by Messrs. Wilkinson in the delivery of bayonets under their contract; whether the time specified for the completion of the contract for 150,000 bayonets was three years from the date of signing the same; and whether Government would insist on this condition being strictly observed?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I explained on the 6th of December last that Messrs. Wilkinson's work was retarded by changes of pattern and delay in the supply of gauges. They have already supplied 21,288 blades, and the condition which will be insisted on is that 1,000 sword bayonets, on the average, shall be supplied weekly.

DOVEY FISHERY BOARD.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a resolution unanimously passed at a meeting of the Dovey Fishery Board in June last, in favour of amending the bye-laws so as to extend the time for net-fishing within the district of their jurisdiction by a fortnight; whether he is aware that, at the meeting of the Board held on the 22nd February, it was announced that Mr. Berrington, Chief Inspector of Fisheries, had, in an interview with the fishermen on 3rd January, expressed a decided opinion that the Board of Trade would not grant the extension of time, and that it was urged that, as the decision of the Board of Trade was almost a foregone conclusion, it would be throwing money away to go through the necessary forms of applying for sanction; and whether it is a fact that the Board of Trade is opposed to such an extension of time for net-fishing; and, if so, why?

*SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: In reply to the first paragraph in the Question, I have to say that my attention has not been called to any such resolution. Mr. Berrington would have no authority to express any opinion on the part of the Board of Trade, and assures me that he did not do so. Mr. Berrington was interviewed by some fishermen at Machynlleth Railway Station on the 3rd January last, and promised to report their views to his Department in the event of any bye-law being sent in for confirmation. In reply to questions he declined to say what view the Board of Trade might take, adding that the proposal would receive full consideration. In answer to one or two of the deputation he advised not being too sanguine of success, looking to the possibilities of opposition from various interests. The Board of Trade will be quite prepared to deal with any question upon its merits.

GRAND JURY PANELS.

MR. O'KEEFFE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland, having regard to the persistent exclusion of Roman Catholics and large land occupiers, duly qualified, from grand juries at present assizes in Ireland, as particularly exemplified by the constitution of the counties Clare and Limerick Grand Juries, if he will consider the advisability of devising a means to intimate to the High Sheriffs the Government's disapproval of such selections?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I have already pointed out in answer to a former Question, the Government have no power whatever to interfere with the discharge by a High Sheriff of his duty in summoning a Grand Jury. If he is guilty of any illegality the matter can be brought before a Judge of Assize, who has power to fine him for any breach of duty. The Government have in no case the power.

LICENSING AUTHORITIES.

SIR WILLIAM HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if the Government has any intention this Session of introducing proposals for transferring the licensing of public-houses from a nominated to an elected body?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No, Sir.

IRELAND—MR. J. FITZGIBBON.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the practice in Ireland, as has been stated to be the case in England, to accede to the application of a solicitor to see a prisoner even though no application should have been received from the prisoner himself; and, whether, if so, he will state the grounds on which the application of Mr. Farrall M'Dormell, solicitor, Roscommon, on the 22nd December last, to see his client, Mr. John Fitzgibbon, in Castlebar Prison, was refused, Mr. Fitzgibbon himself not having made any application, as he had no means of knowing anything about legal matters affecting him which were occurring during his imprisonment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the practice in Ireland is that when a prisoner makes the application to see a solicitor on *bonâ fide* legal business the visit is permitted; also, if the prisoner's solicitor seeks to see the prisoner in regard

to *bonâ fide* pending legal proceedings for or against the prisoner the visit is permitted, provided the prisoner is willing to see the solicitor. In this case it was reported by the Governor that the prisoner Fitzgibbon was asked whether he wished to see Mr. Farrell M'Donnell, solicitor, on business. His reply was that he had "no legal business to transact with anyone," and the Governor reports that he informed the solicitor accordingly.

THE STORNOWAY TRIALS.

DR. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a recent criminal trial at Stornoway, against Mr. Donald MacRae, schoolmaster, of Balallan, and others, for the expulsion of intruders from a meeting of the Highland Land League, after notice had been given to the said intruders to retire; whether the Sheriff dismissed the complaint as unfounded, and characterized the alleged offence as unknown to the law of Scotland; whether the Procurator Fiscal, or his deputy, at whose instance the complaint was raised, are agents for Lady Matheson, the proprietrix of the island; whether, in view of the fact that the complaint was instituted either from ignorance of the law or otherwise, any notice has been taken of the conduct of the Procurator Fiscal or his deputy; and, whether, as the machinery of the Criminal Court has been improperly set in motion, it is intended to make any compensation or redress to Mr. MacRae and the other defendants?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: I must ask the hon. Member to repeat the Question, as there has not been time to make the necessary inquiries.

HAMPTON COURT GARDENS.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if it is a fact that Richard Holland, a man of good character, and appointed by the First Commissioner of Works as foreman in Hampton Court Gardens, has been deprived of the pension he was entitled to under the system in force when he entered the service 36 years ago; whether he is aware that Richard Holland after such long service, and relying on such pension, is now penniless and depending on public charity; what is the cause of the inequality which exists in still giving park and gate keepers pensions, whilst the foreman, who is their superior officer, and requires an amount of technical knowledge, is, from no fault of his own, deprived of one; and whether it is a fact that had Richard Holland retired a year ago he would have been entitled to a pension of at least £20 per annum; and, if so, whether he is prepared to take any and what steps to rectify a manifest injustice?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): The foremen in the Royal Parks have never been legally entitled to pensions, as they do not hold Civil Service certificates. In practice they have, as a rule, received pensions under the title of compassionate allowances; and, if Foreman Holland had retired before 1887 he might no doubt have been awarded such an allowance; but the power of the Treasury to grant these compassionate allowances was taken away by the Superannuation Act of 1887, and consequently Holland was awarded only a gratuity. Park and gate keepers are entitled to superannuation because they are appointed with Civil Service certificates.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND: Can the right hon. Gentleman do anything in this very sad case?

MR. PLUNKET: I am not officially aware of the circumstances, but I am afraid it is a case in which it would be very difficult to get over the Rules.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland can he give a Return of the names, rank, and pay of the Irish officials absent from duty in Ireland to attend the Special Commission, distinguishing the examined and the dates of the examinations from those not called, with the period and dates of their stay in London, and stating in each case if any steps were taken to ascertain approximately when such witnesses would be called, so that the public service might not be dislocated by a prolonged or unnecessary absence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have more than once stated to the House that I do not think it advisable to print any such

Return, at any rate until the labours of the Commission are concluded. I repeat that the Government of Ireland have done their very best to diminish the inconvenience caused by keeping the witnesses in London so long, in obedience to an order of the Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will ascertain by whose instructions Head Constable Preston visited in Millbank certain Irish prisoners; what were the dates and objects of his visits; was it at the request of the prisoners; and what duty was Preston doing in England?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Head Constable Preston visited Thomas Tracy in Millbank on December 5, 1888, and January 24, 1889. He did not visit any other prisoner. He did not visit Tracy by orders of anyone. He obtained an order to do so through Mr. Soames. The object of his visit was to ascertain by whom Tracy had been tampered with. It was at the request of the prisoner that he visited him. Head Constable Preston was not doing duty in England. He has been here on subpœna as a witness before the Special Commission.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to the fact that it was sworn by one informer that Head Constable Preston communicated with him in Canada and brought him to Mr. Soames's office in London?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not see what connection that has with the matter.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): Is it alleged the witness was not tampered with?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I gather that the tampering has not been on the part of the police.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department was it by subpœna, or *habeas corpus*, or under the Prisons Act, that Irish prisoners were brought over to England for the *Times* Commission; and was Delaney produced in Court without a subpœna *ad testificandum;* and, if so, is there any power or precedent for a gaoler producing a prisoner in his custody on a mere subpœna addressed to a prisoner while that prisoner is, by reason of his imprisonment, debarred from obeying or incurring penalties for disobedience thereto?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Special Commission have issued summonses and addressed orders to the governors of Irish prisons to bring over to England prisoners confined in Irish prisons, for the purpose of giving evidence before the Commission. By 51 and 52 Vic., c. 35, s. 2, these summonses are equivalent to any form of process, capable of being issued in any action for enforcing the attendance of witnesses. Delaney was produced before the Special Commission under such a summons and order. I may refer the hon. Member to 44 Geo. III., c. 102.

IRELAND—IMPRISONMENT OF FATHER CLARKE.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is it true, as stated in the public Press, that the Rev. Father Clarke, of Avoca, now undergoing sentence of six weeks' imprisonment in Wexford Gaol for a speech made by him at a public meeting, has been put on bread and water for two terms of 24 hours each; and if he can state why such punishment has been inflicted on the reverend gentleman, and by what authority?

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Rev. J. Clarke, C.C., now a prisoner in Wexford Gaol, has been ordered to pick oakum in his cell, and to associate with criminals at exercise, and has been sentenced by the prison officials to two terms of 24 hours each on bread and water; whether these proceedings are sanctioned by the Government; and whether it is determined that ecclesiastics, though not called upon to wear the prison clothes, are to be required to pick oakum and to associate with criminals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the Rev. J. Clarke was, in accordance with the prison rules, assigned the task of picking oakum, but that neither he nor any other prisoner is permitted to associate with other convicted prisoners. He was ordered by the governor to be placed on punishment diet as indicated in the Question, by reason of his neglect to perform the task assigned. The proceed-

ings were not sanctioned by the Government, but under the requirements of the prison rules.

MR. SEXTON: I should like to know whether the rev. gentleman is actually suffering two terms of imprisonment; whether he has to wear prison clothes, and whether, if not, he is to exercise in company with those wearing convict garb?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The phrase constantly used by hon. Gentlemen that prisoners are exercised with other prisoners is a misleading one, as no communication is allowed between them and they are not allowed to walk close together. As to whether I will use such authority as I possess to make further mitigation of prison rules in the case of priests, it appears to me that enough has been done in that direction; and for what I have already done I have not received any great amount of gratitude.

FLOGGING IN THE BAHAMAS.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table the Papers relating to the flogging inflicted by order of the Chief Justice of the Bahamas?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): If the right hon. Gentleman presses for the presentation of these Papers they can be given; but I should be glad if he would first consult with me, for I think that after seeing the Papers he will agree that, in view of the explanations I have already given in the House, they are not worth the expense of printing.

EXAMINATION OF CONVICTS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if Inspector Littlechild, of Scotland Yard, has recently visited Chatham Prison and interviewed prisoners convicted in connection with the dynamite and other conspiracies; if so, was this visit paid at the request of the prisoners; and, if not, at whose instance, and with what object; and what communication was Littlechild authorized to make to these men, and who authorized him?

MR. MATTHEWS: The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The visit was not at the request of the prisoners, but was for police purposes, under the instructions of the Chief Commissioner of Police. I must decline to make public any instructions given by the police authorities to a police officer for police purposes.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Are we to understand, in addition to the solicitors who may visit prisoners, that a further enlargement of powers to visit prisoners is extended to the police; and have the prisoners an opportunity of declining to receive these visits?

MR. MATTHEWS: The visits are of constant occurrence. Prisoners have no notice of them, and they have no opportunity of declining them.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give notice that I shall in Committee of Supply call attention to the constant visits made on behalf of Mr. Soames and the *Times* to prisoners, and offers made to them of their liberty if they would give evidence, and to the general connivance between the Government and the *Times*.

THE TESTING OF CAVALRY SWORDS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether there is or is not at the War Office a military official definitely charged with and paid for the duty (amongst other things) of providing proper swords for British troops; if so, under what rules of the War Office this official devolved his responsibility for recommending the pattern and tests of the 1885 swords upon a Committee, and did he also devolve any portion of his pay; what was the amount paid to the Committee which proposed the defective pattern and tests; who were the Members of the Committee; and will they or any of them be Members of the Committee for selecting the new pattern and tests; and did the Director of Artillery examine and endorse the proposals of the Committee of 1885; and, if not, upon the recommendation of which responsible official known to Parliament were the defective pattern and tests adopted into the Service?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: The Director of Artillery is primarily responsible that the Army is provided with proper weapons of all sorts; but it is not to be

supposed that any one official could be held personally responsible for the pattern to be adopted for every description of arm. The duty of selecting a pattern is frequently of necessity devolved on a Committee of experts, and the responsibility of the Director of Artillery would not go beyond reviewing the recommendations of such a Committee, and submitting them for approval if he is satisfied with them. The Special Committee on Cavalry Swords of 1885 comprised Sir Drury Lowe, Sir Frederick Abel, the hon. Member for the Hallamshire Division, Colonel Arbuthnot, Colonel Wood, Major Call, and Mr. Latham—which may be described as about the strongest Committee which could have been selected. It was a paid Committee to the extent that most of the members were Army officers receiving military pay. The civilian members were not paid. I am not aware of any intention to appoint a new Committee on Cavalry Swords, as the utmost alteration likely to be made is a slight addition of metal to the blade. The Secretary of State was responsible for the acceptance of the proposals of the Committee of 1885; and, from the evidence and scientific facts laid before him, I hold that he could have adopted no other course. I have no reason to doubt that the sword in the hands of the troops is a fairly good and efficient weapon.

SIR FREDERICK MAPPIN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, who is responsible for the proper testing of Cavalry swords, in accordance with the tests recommended by the Special Committee in 1885, and adopted by the War Office; whether the Chief Inspector of Small Arms saw personally any of the swords, referred to in the Report issued in February last, tested in accordance with it; what authority, or by whose instruction, did this official have the swords in the possession of the 5th Dragoon Guards, the 2nd Dragoons, the 12th Lancers, the 14th Hussars, and the 19th Hussars subjected to a less stringent test than it is stated they had previously passed, and which had not yet been decided upon by the War Office; and, what is the object of testing Cavalry swords less severely than they had been previously subjected to, as stated in the Report signed by the Director of Artillery?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Up to the 31st of March, 1888, the Superintendent of the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield was responsible, under the Director of Artillery, for testing swords. Since that date the Chief Inspector of Small Arms, likewise under the Director of Artillery, has been the responsible officer. I cannot say whether the latter officer personally saw the swords referred to tested when passed into the service. Experience had proved that the tests under which swords of the 1885 pattern had been passed into the service were too severe for that pattern of arm; and it was considered that their repetition would only lead to injury to the swords. On the recommendation, therefore, of the Chief Inspector of Small Arms a test which was considered sufficient to determine whether the swords were serviceable was decided on.

NEWS TELEGRAMS.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works, whether he can now say what steps have been taken to secure for the Members of the House of Commons a continuance of the news telegrams formerly supplied; and whether he is aware that the discontinuance of this supply of news from the beginning of the present Session has caused much dissatisfaction among Members of the House?

MR. PLUNKET: Mr. Speaker, no time has been lost, since we became aware that the supply of news telegrams to the House of Commons had been discontinued, in endeavouring to remove the inconvenience thus caused to hon. Members, and I am in hopes that the supply will be again provided by the beginning of next week.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Who is responsible for the supply of newspapers to the House?

MR. PLUNKET: I have nothing to do with the supply of newspapers; the matter is in the hands of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the *Times* witness Tracy, who was removed some months ago from Belfast Gaol to Millbank, whether he can state on what

grounds the Irish Prisons Board refused the application made on his behalf to have an interview with his solicitor without the presence of a warder, though officers of the Constabulary were allowed to visit him alone; whether directions have been given to the authorities at Millbank Prison to supply him with dinners, drink, and newspapers, same as were provided him in Belfast Gaol at the expense of the police authorities there; and, whether, considering the serious nature of the allegations made by Tracy as to threats and promises of reward held out to him by the police officers who visited him at Belfast, in the event of his refusing or consenting to swear as instructed at the Special Commission, he will grant an independent inquiry into all the circumstances in connection with these visits, and as to the communications made to him by the police at and since his removal from Castlebar Gaol?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As to the first and third paragraphs I have not been able to get the information. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will address the Question in the second paragraph to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary.

MR. M'CARTAN: When will the right hon. Gentleman have the information?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I suppose to-morrow. It may be necessary to make local inquiry.

MR. MATTHEWS: No drink or newspapers are supplied to Tracy. He is on a scale of prison diet, prepared by the Prisons Board, corresponding as nearly as possible with the dietary of Irish prisons, which is more liberal than the English dietary.

MR. M'CARTAN: Is this in consequence of a certain statement made by him?

MR. MATTHEWS: No; it is not in consequence of anything he said or did. A dietary was introduced to assimilate the food to that given to Irish prisoners when in Irish prisons.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how long Captain Plunkett and Mr. Stack have been in London during the sitting of the Parnell Commission; and whether he is in a position to state that none of the divisional or resident magistrates have communicated in Ireland or in England with witnesses to be called by the *Times* newspaper, and that such magistrates have held no communication with the agents and counsel for that newspaper, except in regard to the evidence to be given by themselves?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that Captains Plunkett and Stack were detained in London for 54 and 60 days respectively. I have no grounds for thinking that any communications of the kind to which the right hon. Gentleman seems to object have been held by Irish magistrates. I conceive, however, that it would be the plain duty of any person, whether a magistrate or not, to do what he legitimately could to elucidate the truth concerning any question bearing on the investigation now going on before the Commission, about which he either had special knowledge or knew where to obtain such.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Do I understand the answer of the right hon. Gentleman to be that he is to communicate that knowledge to the Government or to the *Times* newspaper?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I laid down on Tuesday last the general principle which I thought ought to regulate the action of the Government in this matter. I have nothing to add to what I then said.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is in a position to state that none of the Royal Irish Constabulary have been employed to collect evidence, to see or to watch witnesses, or pay money to, or to take proofs of witnesses for the *Times* newspaper before the Parnell Commission; and whether he is in a position to state that none of the Irish Constabulary have been detained in London since the commencement of the Commission for any longer period than was necessary to give their evidence, and that they had been employed on no services connected with the case of the *Times* newspaper except such as were directly necessary for the giving of their own evidence upon their subpœnas?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the Royal Irish Constabulary have not been employed in collecting evidence except in relation to the evidence they were prepared to give before the Special Commission, nor have they paid money or taken proofs of witnesses. I

believe they have, in certain cases, kept an eye on witnesses when there was ground for thinking that they might be molested or tampered with.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of the Question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that none of the Irish Constabulary have been detained for any longer time than was necessary, nor have they been employed on services connected with the *Times* newspaper. But I am not sure that that is quite correct. At any rate, they have undoubtedly kept some kind of watch upon witnesses.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I beg to give notice that I shall put a further Question, founded on specific instances sworn to before the Commission.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I should like to know whether constables have in no case taken proofs or got up evidence for the *Times?*

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that they have not taken proofs.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the right hon. Gentleman communicated with a constable named Irwin, or his superiors, or with Preston, and will he say how Preston came to be in communication with Coleman, and how Mr. Soames came to be in possession of Coleman's letters?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never heard of Coleman.

IRON AND COPPER TELEGRAPH WIRES.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he still proposes to replace the present iron telegraph wires by copper wires; and, if so, when?

MR. RAIKES: So long as the difference in the price between copper and iron wire is so large, the Post Office, in erecting new wires, must make use of iron. There has been no intention of generally replacing iron wire by copper.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACT—THE LAMBCOTE TENANT RIGHT CASE.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether his attention has been called to the Lambcote Grange Tenant Right Case, recently decided by Judge Bristowe in the Doncaster County Court, under the Agricultural Holdings Act; whether the tenant, Mr. Fawcett, entered into possession in 1880, and paid the outgoing tenant £1,500 for the tenant right, in the usual way, according to the custom; whether he received an assurance from the landlord that there was no mortgage on the farm; whether, in 1887, he gave notice to leave the farm, and, on a valuation being made under the Agricultural Holdings Act, the sum assessed as due to Mr. Fawcett was £1,018; whether the farm proved to have been mortgaged in 1874, and the mortgagees stepped in, took possession of the farm, growing crops, manure, corn-stacks, and everything belonging to the tenant, and turned him out without any compensation at all, either under the Agricultural Holdings Act or of any kind whatever; whether Judge Bristowe ultimately ruled that the mortgagees were acting within their rights, and that Mr. Fawcett had no claim to the tenant right he had bought owing to the mortgage being in existence before his tenancy began; whether both parties now admit that this ruling is quite in accordance with the law; and, whether, inasmuch as under these circumstances the security of a vast number of tenants under the Agricultural Holdings Act is practically destroyed, he will bring in a Bill to remedy this injustice, and render the tenants' just claims secure by making them a first charge on the land he occupies?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I have communicated with the learned County Court Judge. I believe that the facts are correctly stated in the hon. Member's Question, except as to the third paragraph, as to which I have no information. The fact therein referred to was not material to the case raised before the learned County Court Judge, as the sole question was whether a relation of landlord and tenant had been created between the tenant and the mortgagees, and the learned Judge, upon the evidence, held that it had not. I am informed that the petitioner, Mr. Fawcett, has been advised by eminent counsel that the decision of the learned Judge is right. I cannot undertake to bring in a Bill upon the matter, as the case depended upon its special facts, and the hardship

upon the tenant was due to the circumstances under which he had entered upon the tenancy.

PUBLIC PROCEEDINGS IN WELSH.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General whether he is aware that Coroners and Official Receivers in bankruptcy in Welsh-speaking districts carry on their proceedings in Welsh, notwithstanding the pain of forfeiture of office enacted in the Statute of Wales; and, whether he will introduce a Bill to repeal or modify the Section of the Statute thus rendered obsolete?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I am not aware of what is the practice of Coroners, or Official Receivers in Bankruptcy, but upon the information before me I doubt whether there is any necessity for an amendment of the law in this matter.

MR. T. ELLIS: I desire to know whether members of representative bodies, or Coroners and other officials in Welsh speaking districts, cannot carry on proceedings in the language of the district, not merely as a matter of courtesy, but as a matter of right.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I think the hon. Gentleman had better put his Question on the paper.

MR. G. O. MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): Would not such persons so acting be liable to very severe penalties?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I doubt whether any of these persons could become liable to a penalty.

MR. G. O. MORGAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the provisions of the 20th Section of the 27th Henry VIII., c. 26, that—

"No person or persons that used the Welsh speech or language shall have or enjoy any manor, office, or fees within the King's dominions upon pain of forfeiting the same offices and fees, unless he or they use and exercise the English speech or language,"

are admittedly obsolete, he will take steps to have this antiquated enactment repealed?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think if the right hon. Gentleman will refer to 50 and 51 Vic., c. 59, he will find that the Section of 27th Henry VIII., c. 26, to which he takes exception, is already repealed.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

*MR. SPEAKER called upon Mr. Summers, in whose name Question No. 61 stood.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield): I wish to postpone this Question.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Why? I think I can claim that the Question shall be put.

MR. SUMMERS: Then I put it.

[The Question was as follows:—To ask Mr. Attorney General whether he is correctly reported as having said, on 16th July, 1888, with reference to the case of O'Donnell *v.* Walter and another—

"I have received not the slightest communication from the Government of any sort or kind, direct or indirect, in order to assist me in the performance of my duties as counsel for the defendants;"

and, whether he is able to give the House a similar assurance with regard to the proceedings before the Parnell Commission Court?]

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The quotation of my words of the 16th of July last is, I think, correct. When I was instructed to act for the *Times* after the Commission Bill was passed, and from that date to the present, Mr. Soames has, from time to time at my request, applied to the officials both in Ireland and England for information as to specific facts and persons bearing upon the charges and allegations. Mr. Soames has communicated to me the result of such applications, which I have used for the purposes of the Commission. I desire to add that Mr. Soames, on the 14th of February, 1889, stated in examination-in-chief that he was prepared to give the Court every information as to the source from which and the way in which he had obtained the evidence laid before the Court, and that no question whatever was put to him in cross-examination by any of the learned counsel, excepting in connection with the unfortunate man Pigott.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it not the case that when I attempted to cross-examine Mr. Soames on this point I was immediately stopped by the Court?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I think the hon. and learned Gentleman was treated by the Court with great courtesy; but I recollect that when the hon. and learned Gentleman wished to ask a question, he was requested to

state on what point of relevance he proposed to ask it, and, not being able to say, he did not put it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg leave to say that my recollection does not accord with that of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and I was not treated with courtesy by the Court.

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. JOHN KELLY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the legislation referred to in Her Most Gracious Majesty's Speech in respect of the Report of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments will cover the whole question of civil establishments or deal only with the question of superannuation?

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to state when the legislation referred to in the Royal Speech in respect to the Report of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments will be submitted to the House?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope to lay on the table very shortly a Bill dealing with that part of the report of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments which relates to pensions, and I propose also shortly to lay on the table a Minute of the Treasury stating our views upon the questions of organization which have received the consideration of the Commissions.

IRELAND – CASEY AND KELLIHER.

MR. T. HARRINGTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true that at the Killarney Petty Sessions, held on Tuesday, 26th February, two young men of the peasant class were sentenced by Mr. A. J. M'Dermot, R.M., and Captain Massey, R.M., to find bail each in £40 and two sureties of £20 each, or to be imprisoned for six months and kept to hard labour, for being among a group of persons who cheered for Mr. William O'Brien; whether these young men are now in prison and undergoing hard labour; whether there is any precedent for sentencing a prisoner to hard labour in default of bail; and whether it is true that, in the case of one of these prisoners at east, the policeman who brought the charge swore that he did not hear the accused cheer, but saw him among the crowd that had cheered?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Two men, named Casey and Kelliher, were tried under the ordinary law before a Bench of Magistrates on which, in addition to the two Resident Magistrates named in the Question, there were two other Magistrates belonging to the district. They were tried for booing and abusing the constabulary under circumstances which made the charge a serious one. They were bound to be of good behaviour for six months or in default to be imprisoned, though not with hard labour, as is alleged in the Question. One of them was at once bailed out; the other was bailed out on the 1st inst.

"PARNELLISM AND CRIME."

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whom I can ask without offence, as to the circulation of false, foul, infamous libels contained in "Parnellism and Crime" through an agency I will not mention. [*Cries of* "Order, order," *and interruption.*] By way of personal explanation, Mr. Speaker, I desire to say that these libels were on sale on the day after I asked my Question last week ["Order, order"], and I do not consider it a private and personal matter. ["Order, order."]

No answer was returned to the Question.

THE IMPRISONMENT OF DR. TANNER.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if it is true that Dr. Tanner, M.P., on the night of his arrest was obliged to sit in a chair all night, as no bed had been provided for him by the authorities at Scotland Yard?

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): Before the right hon Gentleman answers that Question, perhaps he will be kind enough to inform the House whether every arrangement was not made at Scotland Yard for the comfort of Dr. Tanner, and whether he was not supplied with cigars, whisky and water, and other refreshments?

MR. MATTHEWS: There is no bed at Scotland Yard, and accordingly an armchair in the Inspector's

room was placed at the disposal of the hon. Member for Mid-Cork. In the ordinary course the hon. Gentleman would have been lodged for the night in the cells in King Street Police Station; but the police authorities, with the intention of showing the hon. Member every consideration, brought him to Scotland Yard and administered as far as possible to his comfort. If my hon. and gallant Friend wishes particulars, Dr. Tanner was supplied with sandwiches, whisky, and cigars. I understand that Dr. Tanner acknowledged the courtesy which was shown him.

MR. W. REDMOND: Arising out of his answer, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he agrees with the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh that whisky and cigars are a sufficient substitute for a bed?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

THE MORPETH SHOOTING CASE.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the following:—"Sheffield, March 4.—John Hardwick and a man named Coalman were sentenced to penal servitude in 1879 for shooting a farmer and his son near Morpeth. The real culprits confessed, and Hardwich and Coalman were released on a ticket-of.leave;" and why these men were not "pardoned?"

MR. MATTHEWS: I presume the hon. Member refers to the case of Hardwicke and Walford, who were released on licence in 1882. The then Secretary of State decided that while there was sufficient doubt as to the guilt of the prisoners to make it impossible to keep them in prison, it would not be right, in view of the extraordinary conflict of evidence in the case, to grant them a free pardon. This decision was reviewed and confirmed by the two succeeding Secretaries of State. I have also most carefully examined the whole of the facts, and find it impossible to come to any other conclusion than that arrived at by my three predecessors.

MR. W. REDMOND: Is it not the fact that the real culprit confessed, and if it is, why were these men not pardoned?

MR. MATTHEWS: The facts are not as the hon. Gentleman says.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I believe it would be convenient to the right hon. Gentleman and the House if he would state what are the views of the Government with regard to the future business of the House.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for giving me an opportunity of stating the course which we recommend for the conduct of business during the next fortnight. The right hon. Gentleman and the House are aware that we are under a necessity of obtaining Votes for the Army, Navy, and Civil Service, Supplementary Votes for the present year, and the excess Votes, in time to get a Bill passed the Houses of Parliament by the 28th or 29th of March. It is our intention, therefore, to ask the House to listen to the statements of the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord G. Hamilton) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) with reference to the proposals of the Government for strengthening the Navy. I do not ask the House to come to any decision or to express any judgment at once on these proposals. It would not be reasonable or fair to ask the House to do so. It would be also unreasonable and unfair that the Government should ask the House to vote on the proposals until the Navy Estimates are considered. I would suggest, therefore, that when the statements have been made by my right hon. Friends, and questions in elucidation of their statements have been answered, it would be for the convenience of the House and the progress of business that we should at once report progress on the Resolution without taking any division until the Navy Estimates are considered. In that case we should propose to take the Supplementary Estimates to-night. On Monday next we shall ask the House to give us the first Vote for the Navy. On Monday week we shall ask for a Vote on Account, and take the Excess Votes, if there should be any, reported from the Committee on Public Accounts. Hon. Gentlemen are aware that we must have the Votes to which I have referred before the end of the financial year; otherwise we should have to ask the House for a Supplementary Vote. To-morrow I propose to ask

the House to pass a Resolution with regard to the arrangements indicated last Session for providing practically two days in the week for the consideration of Supply. I trust that the House will accept that proposal as one intended to remedy some inconvenience.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will not express any opinion on the last point, as I hope my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian will be here to-morrow, and say something upon it. I understand that the Vote on Account will be taken on Monday week.

MR. H. FOWLER: I would like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to one item in the Supplementary Estimates, namely, the large increase on the Pension Vote. There is an addition upon the Vote of something like £8,000, and no names are given of persons who are to receive the extra grants. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not proceed with the Vote to-night,

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is aware that the Supplementary Estimates were only circulated this morning, and whether, therefore, he thinks it fair to take them to-night?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman is aware that it is not in our power to circulate them before the debate on the Address is ended. The information which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) desires is never given, as I understand, on the Supplementary Estimates, but I shall be exceedingly happy to satisfy him on the subject.

MR. DUFF (Banffshire): Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman asks the House to give up the right of general discussion on going into the Estimates?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I did not ask the House to give up any right, but what I stated implied that the prolongation of the discussion on the Address has forced us into a corner, and as the hon. Gentleman himself is aware, there is no alternative but to ask the House to give us a Vote.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury notice that the Attorney General has put down on the paper a Bill of a most obnoxious character to a large part of the House—I refer to the Criminal Evidence Bill. Will he give us an assurance that, unless that Bill appears as a First Order on the Paper, there will be no attempt to snap a Second Reading? Will he promise that a measure of such importance will be made the First Order before being taken?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: Ample notice will be given of the date on which it is intended to take the Second Reading of this Bill.

LORD C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury how many days the House will have between the date when the Government intend to lay the Navy Estimates before the House, and the time when the Government must get the money? Many hon. Members who feel strongly on certain questions have, on previous occasions, been obliged to curtail their observations, or not make them at all, through unwillingness to hamper the Government or prevent them from getting the money by a certain date. I wish to know if we are to have an opportunity of discussing the Wages Vote, on which I have two very important points to raise?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid I cannot give many days for the discussion of the Wages Vote. Unless the money is obtained before the 18th or 19th of March, as the noble Lord is aware, the wages of the men will not be paid on the 1st of April. The prolongation of the Debate on the Address has left the Government no more time than stated to the House. If the House desires longer consideration for the Estimates before the end of the Financial year, the only result will be that we shall be compelled to ask for more of the time now belonging to Private Members, much as I wish to avoid such a request. But I assure my noble Friend that ample opportunity will be given to hon. Members to raise any question relating either to the Naval and Military Services or the Civil Service.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to give notice that on the Vote on Account I shall oppose it generally and particularly, having no sort of confidence in Her Majesty's present Government.

SIR J. PULESTON (Devonport): Will the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury give us a pledge that the discussion of the Navy Estimates will not be deferred until the end of the Session, and that if there are any points in connection with them that we consider of the first importance we shall have an opportunity of discussing them?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have indicated the days on which it is proposed to take the Estimates. We shall take the Army Estimates on Monday, and those of the Navy on Thursday, and the Vote on Account for the Civil Service on the following Monday.

SIR W. BARTTELOT: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury a Question on a subject of great importance. I think the right hon. Gentleman stated that we should have vote No. I. (Vote A)—the first Vote in the Army Estimates—on Monday. Well, on more than one occasion we have been obliged to put off the discussion of the Vote, and what I wish to know, and what many military men in this House wish to know, is whether, assuming that the Vote must be passed on Monday, the right hon. Gentleman will on that day announce his intention of giving us another early opportunity for the discussion of these Estimates?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I thought I had already explained my full desire and intention to give every opportunity for the fullest discussion of every question which hon. Gentlemen wish to raise.

SIR W. BARTTELOT: We have sometimes been put off for two, three, and even more months, until it has been impossible to discuss the questions at all. I desire that the right hon. Gentleman should give us an assurance that we shall have full opportunity for the discussion of these matters in reasonable time.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I quite hope that I shall be able to give that full opportunity. To say that I will do so, or can do so, would be to enter into an engagement which, I am sure, the hon. and gallant Baronet, knowing the difficulties of the position of the Leader of the House, would not expect me to enter into. We propose to give hon. Members as early an opportunity as possible for the discussion of all the Estimates.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

"To nominate the Select Committee on Public Accounts:—Sir John Lubbock, Sir Walter Barttelot, Mr. Salt, Mr. Barran, Sir Richard Temple, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Mr. Arthur O. Connor, and Mr. Wodehouse."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): Before this Committee is appointed I should like to express my regret and surprise that no Members from Scotland are on the list. The requirements of Scotland as to the expenditure of public money are not quite identical with those of England, and there are many Scotch Members in the House who would like to be represented on the Committee. I have communicated with the authorities who have charge of these matters on this side of the House, and I think I am right in saying that they regard it as a strange thing that it is not proposed to put Scotch Members on this Committee.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): Personally I should be very glad if arrangements could be made to include one or two Scotch Members on the Committee.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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NAVAL DEFENCE.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Resolution which I shall have to propose as to the building of ships, clearly brings to the mind of the Committee the object with which it is made. It is made for the purpose of giving effect to repeated declarations made by different Members of the Government that the time has now arrived, in their judgment, for a survey of our Naval establishments with a view of materially increasing their strength. Four years ago an almost similar motion was made by the First Lord of the Admiralty under the Administration of the right hon Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). Lord Northbrook then proposed largely to augment the normal shipbuilding pro-

gramme and to add to the number of guns, and large additional ways and means were added for a period of years to the ordinary Naval Estimates. That programme, which has been known as the Northbrook programme, is practically complete. I wish to say nothing about it, except from an administrative point of view. The peculiarity attending its execution has been that ships have been built much more rapidly than it was anticipated they would be, and they have been kept waiting in some cases for months, and in other cases for years for guns which alone could make them efficient fighting machines. Now, I think, we shall all agree that one of the first duties of any one connected with naval administration is to try and reduce to the smallest limits the amount of money locked up in incomplete and useless ships. There can be no object in accelerating the shipbuilding process if the ships whose construction has been so expedited are to be kept waiting for long periods of time for their guns. Therefore, early last year my right hon. Friend the Secretary for War (Mr. Stanhope) gave very close attention to the subject, with a view of ascertaining how far the existing block was capable of being removed, and how far the causes which tended to produce it were preventible for the future. If the Naval progress during the last two years has not been so rapid as some of my hon. Friends would wish, it was due to a block on the road, through the road being too narrow, and the widening of the road to accommodate the increase of traffic was clearly the duty to be undertaken. We have now widened the road, and I believe I may with confidence say we are able to push on our work with regularity and expedition. Now, in addition to these vessels, which are comprised in the Northbrook programme, a considerable number of other vessels have been laid down and completed during the last three years. But there is one particular class of vessels to which I must allude. I may almost say the magnitude and ubiquity of our commerce force us to perform on the high seas almost single-handed many police duties, and for the purpose of performing them and protecting the smaller currents of our trade along the coast vessels have in the past been employed of small capacity and slow speed; and these vessels were, from their want of tonnage and slow speed, useless for effective war purposes. To replace these obsolete vessels by a limited number of efficient gunboats has been one of the duties performed during the last three years; and we have built sufficient to supply that branch of the service for several years to come. Therefore the money to be devoted to the increase of shipbuilding in the construction of new ships for years to come will be solely devoted to vessels which are designed for war purposes alone. On the 1st of April, 1889, we shall have in process of building in our dockyards and by contract about 30 vessels, and on the 1st of April, 1890, we shall have completed all those vessels except four, and those four will be in a final stage of their construction. Therefore it was evident early last year that it would be our duty to submit a new shipbuilding programme, to this House to take the place of the Northbrook programme, which is practically complete. Early last summer Her Majesty's Government took into consideration the bases and the principles upon which the new shipbuilding programme was to be founded. It had been admitted, I think, on all hands, that although we had made considerable progress during the last three years, yet our Naval establishments had not attained the strength at which they should be permanently maintained. I have endeavoured in the past to give effect to the Northbrook programme by concentrating our attention on the ships and work which we had in hand, adding to them the vessels which were most urgently required, but taking care every year that the new ships completed and ready for commission were largely in excess of the old vessels which became obsolete—that is, to put into the Navy a good deal more than we took out of it, and so to build it up towards the level at which we thought it ought to be maintained. Her Majesty's Government had to consider whether this should be the principle on which the new programme should be based. There was an alternative on which to base our programme, and that was, after a full survey had been made of the requirements of the Navy and of the country, and having ascertained what the deficiencies were, to do our best to make them good, with all the rapidity which was consistent

with good construction. Her Majesty's Government determined to adopt that principle, and our new shipbuilding programme is based upon it. Undoubtedly it is an advance—at least I think I may say it is a departure from the principle on which, or the methods by which preceding shipbuilding programmes have been calculated. It is frequently maintained in certain quarters that the Army and Navy expenditure of the country should be regulated by the opinions of experts whose services are at the disposal of the Government. That is a doctrine in which Her Majesty's Government cannot acquiesce. The Executive Government of this country are entrusted with the duty of managing the whole of the policy of the country, and one essential portion of the responsibility of the Executive Government is the making of the needful provision for our naval and military requirements. The responsibility of initiating increase of expenditure upon those services must rest upon the Government, and upon the Government alone. I do not believe it would be possible, and certainly it would be most improper for any Government to attempt to shirk that responsibility by endeavouring to shelter themselves behind the opinion of their professional advisers. But when the principle of future expenditure has been settled, it is clearly the duty of the Government to take the advice of their professional officers, in order that the increase of expenditure may be so formulated as to be of the utmost use in increasing the efficiency of the services to which it is to be appropriated. Therefore, so soon as we had settled the principle on which the shipbuilding policy was to be based directions were given to our naval advisers that they were to prepare, in accordance with the principles laid down, some scheme of shipbuilding. Since then a good deal has happened; but the scheme which was then drawn out on the foundation I have mentioned is in many respects practically the scheme which I am about to lay before the House. In the interval Her Majesty's Government have given their constant attention to this question and in many particulars, and in some important items, the scheme has been modified during the past six or eight months. And, Sir, before I leave this part of the subject I should like to acknowledge publicly the very great assistance which we have received from our naval advisers in the preparation and elaboration of the scheme I am about to unfold. The first and foremost of these advisers is Admiral Sir Arthur Hood, whose immense technical knowledge, calm judgment, and intuitive administrative capacity have not only in this instance, but ever since I had the honour to be associated with him, been of enormous benefit to the Naval Service. It is rather a curious coincidence that there was another body, quite independent of Her Majesty's Ministers, considering the principles upon which the shipbuilding programme should be based. Last year the House appointed a Select Committee, over which the right hon. Member for the Stirling Burghs has presided with his characteristic common sense, impartiality, and ability. That Committee was composed of men of every section of political opinion in this House. We differed on a good many matters, but there was a proposition to which that Committee gave a unanimous assent, and it was to this effect—that any new shipbuilding programme should be based upon a full survey and knowledge of the whole requirements of the Naval Service of the country. That decision, or rather that recommendation of the Select Committee, was arrived at some months after the decision of the Government, and it is a curious coincidence, because it shows that so far from this increase of naval expenditure which we advocate being necessarily associated, as some think it is, with the traditions, training, and predilections of the Tory Party, we have indisputable evidence to the contrary, a body of men specially appointed to consider questions of naval expenditure and temporarily dissociated from their polititial prejudices having arrived at identically the same conclusions as Her Majesty's Government. I should like to lay before the House some considerations which influenced us in arriving at the conclusion that an increase of naval strength was necessary. Our commerce has greatly increased during the past few years, and it will continue to increase, but the mere development of our commerce is not in my judgment a conclusive argument for a proportionate increase in naval expenditure. The examination

of a few figures will show that the increase in tonnage is greatly due to the enlargement of the size of vessels rather than to an increase in their number. This increased tonnage therefore means increased strength and greater steaming power; and it therefore follows that every year a large proportion of our mercantile marine has become more and more capable of taking care of itself, and of evading hostile depredation. So much is this the case that the actual amount of new tonnage added to the English mercantile marine during the past ten years is very nearly equal to the total of the steam tonnage of the rest of the world. While submitting, therefore, the magnitude of the interests we have to protect is one factor in the calculation, that which should primarily govern us in considering the strength of naval establishments is the amount of force which is available to attack or injure our commercial interests. In Her Majesty's gracious Speech allusion is made to the fact that there has been in recent years unceasing expenditure on naval armaments by European nations. It is quite true that this is not altogether applicable to the last two or three years with regard to the leading Naval Powers of Europe; but, taking the last 15 years and dividing them into quinquennial periods, it is found that each five years show an increase on the previous five years. This is true of every European nation that has any considerable seaboard. It must always be remembered that naval expenditure differs in this respect from military expenditure—that the actual returns are not available so soon. If any one wants to examine into a Naval Budget, he must not merely have regard to the expenditure in any one particular year as conclusive proof that in that year no addition was made to that particular Navy; he must go behind this to the expenditure of some of the years before, and this will not infrequently disclose the fact that in a year when the expenditure has apparently fallen there has been the greatest increase of naval force, owing to ships, the expense of which has been met in previous years, being completed in this year. In this very year, when to the mere naval statistician the naval expenditure appeared to be lowered, there may have been the greatest augmentation of naval force. Now we have had one great advantage during the last few years in our shipbuilding policy; we have adjusted the work we have taken in hand with our finances, and we have been able to make most rapid progress with all the vessels we have had in hand. Foreign nations, however, have acted on another principle. They have allowed their shipbuilding programme to outrun the compass of their annual finance, and have not made the same progress we have. There is a great amount of incomplete work on which expenditure in the past has been incurred; therefore, in looking to the future we must take cognizance of not only prospective expenditure, but add that to the expenditure already incurred in reference to unfinished ships to estimate the addition made to the naval force of foreign countries. If we apply this test, we find that during the next five years there will be a large addition to the war fleets of Europe, especially in the matter of battle-ships. I had hoped some two years ago that the *Nile* and *Trafalgar* would be the last battle-ships laid down in this country. It then appeared as if there was to be a general cessation of armour-clad building, and that for reasons not far to seek, torpedo boats had come into use, and naval officers were inclined greatly to exaggerate the effect of the change. The result was that the second European Naval Power, France, practically suspended her armour clad building, and other nations followed her example; but since then, owing in part to the development of quick firing guns, and partly to the invention of new explosives, a great impetus has been given to battle-ship building. Therefore, it is our duty, as we find our neighbours are pushing forward the building of this class of ships, to make similar efforts. We cannot fail to take cognizance of the fact. We may talk of our supremacy on the sea, but that supremacy is measured by the number of battle-ships we can put into line. In the observations I have made I am re-echoing the view expressed in the gracious Speech that our relations are friendly and cordial with all nations. Still, it requires no very deep student of history to know that there are certain sections of opinion and of influence in foreign countries which are unfriendly to this country, owing to jealousy of our

prosperity and envy of our great colonial expansion, with our immunity from conscription and all its attendant evils and the like; and if any one of these influences, these cycles of opinion, happen temporarily to become predominant, we cannot ignore the fact that increased naval armaments may be available for our annoyance and injury. I have endeavoured during the past year to study the speeches of those who in previous years have held my position and that of Prime Minister, so as to ascertain what was the paramount idea underlying their utterances when they spoke of the standard of strength on which our naval establishment should be maintained. I think I am correct in saying that the leading idea has been that our establishment should be on such a scale that it should at least be equal to the naval strength of any two other countries. I notice that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) has given expression to that view. The right hon. Gentleman was noted as an advocate of vigorous economy at the Admiralty, but he has stated that he felt certain that when he left the Admiralty the British fleet was equal to the combined naval forces of any two other countries. That may have been the case; but it must be borne in mind that at the time of which the right hon. Gentleman speaks there was only one considerable Naval Power in Europe, while the feature of the present situation is that there are now not one or two, but four or five nations which are spending largely on their naval armaments. When, then, there is this simultaneous development of naval force going on, it is quite clear that the strength of the combination of any two other countries must be regarded as considerably increased in the aggregate. This is a fact that we cannot ignore, and we must therefore either be content with a less measure of precaution than that which in past years was supposed to regulate our Naval Estimates, or we must be prepared to face an increased expenditure, or those Estimates I have always endeavoured to speak with reserve upon the question of what would be the effect of a naval war upon our commerce. I do not believe that ten cruisers or twenty cruisers would annihilate that commerce or cut off our food supplies; but, on the other hand, it is quite clear that any system of commerce and mercantile marine must be based on the security and price of freight, or, on the outbreak or danger of war, there might be a rude shock or a great disturbance to a branch of some trade, which might go altogether, leading to a total cessation of other branches of the same trade. No doubt, at the moment, it would be the apprehension of what might occur rather than the occurrences themselves, and it would be most necessary that there should, at the outbreak of a war, be a feeling of perfect confidence in our naval strength. I have sufficient confidence in the energy and capabilities of our merchant seamen, and believe that they would soon adjust themselves to the requirements of such conditions; but in order to sustain that confidence the supremacy of our Fleet is a necessary preliminary. This is a view that not only I, but naval officers, hold. The changes that have been effected in naval matters during the last few years have certainly increased the difficulty of maintaining a close blockade, and here the recent Naval Manœuvres have given us useful lessons. A military strategist, in conducting a campaign, requires information on two points—he wishes to know the amount of the force that can be brought against him, and he also wishes to know the uses to which it can be put. On land the number of military movements or combinations is limited by many conditions—the frontier of the territory — the geographical lie of the country, the course of rivers, the means of transport, even the conditions of weather; these and other matters must enter into his consideration, and impose limitations upon his movements. But this is not so in regard to naval combinations. A ship is self-supporting, carrying her own stores and commissariat, and without any warning can proceed to join any combination that may take place at any rendezvous in any part of the world. No amount of foresight or calculation can anticipate naval combinations and naval movements; therefore, it seems to me essential that, for the purpose of meeting such unexpected blows, we should have a considerable margin of reserve; and if this is to be utilized in the way I have indicated it must be equipped, and armed, and ready for sea at a few days' notice.

Lord George Hamilton

I venture to lay these arguments before the Committee, because I think they are worthy of attention, and are incontrovertible conclusions for the premises from which Her Majesty's Government started or which they accepted, that there should be no declination from the assumed standard of strength in the past. I am no alarmist, and much dislike the waste of public money, and in the controversies that have taken place during the last few years I have frequently combated exaggerated and sensational statements, for I have always considered it mean for a Government to take an advantage of an ephemeral phase of public excitement to incur unnecessary expenditure. Nothing is more foolish than to enforce demands for increased expenditure by arguments based on facts which will not stand discussion or the test of experience. But there seems to me to be no alternatives but those I have stated; we must either be content with a lower standard of precaution than in the past, or we must be prepared to face increased expenditure. Her Majesty's Government, in the present state of European politics, cannot recommend the former course; on the contrary, we shall use all our influence and authority to endeavour to induce the House of Commons to meet this necessity for increased naval expenditure. Having stated, therefore, the nature and scope of the scheme which I am about to propose, I should like to turn to some other conditions to which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, that scheme should conform. We considered that it should be entire in itself, and adequate, not only to our immediate, but also to our future wants. We considered that every vessel should be an effective war vessel of the newest type and most approved design, and that every vessel, when once laid down, should be pushed on with all the rapidity compatible with sound construction, and that as these vessels approach completion preparations should be made for the necessary accumulation of men and stores and guns which would enable a ship to become an efficient fighting machine. To associate with that scheme of expenditure these business-like conditions necessitated a good deal of previous investigation and work. Upon that work we have been engaged for the past three years; and, although there may seem at first sight to be little connection between the proposals I now have to make and the work we have done, in reality that work is the foundation on which we base our scheme. We considered it to be essential that before we asked the House for additional money for naval purposes we should be able to show that the national shipbuilding yards were well administered, that the scandal of ships waiting for guns should not be repeated, and that the designs for new ships should be in accordance with the view of naval officers and naval scientists. Upon the questions of the administrations of the Dockyards, the supply of guns, and the preparations of designs I will therefore say a few words. In the comparison too frequently made between our Dockyards and private yards sufficient allowance is not made for the variety and multiplicity of those duties which the former have to perform, and from which private yards are free. Everything that relates to a great fleet of warships has to be done in the Dockyards. Almost all the officering, manning, victualling, storing, coaling, and lighting—these and many other services, which in a great commercial port are performed by various public and private agencies, are performed by the Dockyards. In addition to this, it is necessary to have a great accumulation of stores and men ready for action at a moment's notice. Moreover, we have so to arrange our machinery that every branch of it may be capable of great expansion in case of emergency. Naval mobilization is just the reverse of military mobilization. The former is decentralization and localization, while the latter is concentration and centralization. If we were unfortunate enough to get into any war, every man, every officer, every store, and every gun, as well as ammunition, would have to pass through the Dockyards in order to be put on board the ships commissioned in those Dockyards. Therefore, though it is necessary to keep a tight hand on these subsidiary and incidental services, it would be most unadvisable to cut them down beyond a certain limit, because in case of emergency it would be impossible to expand or extend them. In the past three years we have dissociated these incidental services

from shipbuilding and repairing. We have brought them to account and have largely reduced their amount. We have made regulations by which men once put on shipbuilding are kept there and not taken for other purposes, and we have established a form of account which is working admirably. There was a little difference of opinion between the Admiralty and the Treasury which came into prominence before the Committee last year; but since then the Treasury have sent a high official, Mr. Waterhouse, to make an examination, and he has expressed himself as highly satisfied with the system, and suggested its further extension. These alterations have effected a perfect revolution in the Dockyards. Ships are now built with a rapidity rivalling that of private yards. The *Trafalgar*, which is the largest ship of war ever built in this country, was completed in the unprecedentedly short time of three years and three months. It is conclusively proved in this instance that rapidity of construction is a convertible term for economy of construction, for not only has the ship been built with this great expedition, but the saving on the original Estimate is £100,000, of which £85,000 is on labour alone. The last ironclad built is the *Anson*, which is of much less tonnage than the *Trafalgar*. Six years were occupied in her construction, and the cost of labour alone on the lesser ship was £30,000 more than on the *Trafalgar*. Therefore a cardinal point of our new proposals is that we should establish in our Dockyards a system by which there should be a statutory enactment that ships should be pushed on with all possible rapidity, for it is better for this House to limit the number of ships than to assent to a larger number and then to reduce and curtail the money necessary for their completion. And now I turn to the question of guns. The knowledge that a considerable number of very powerful ships had so long been waiting for their guns has resulted in somewhat exaggerated statements being made as to the gun-producing power and condition of our Ordnance Department. A very short recital of the circumstances under which breech-loading guns were introduced into the Service will at once make clear to the Committee what is the nature of the block from which we are now suffering. In the earlier days of heavy Ordnance English guns were muzzle-loaders, and the muzzle-loading system was brought to great perfection, so much so that naval officers declined to part with their guns, which were in every way equal to the breech-loaders of foreign nations. About 12 or 13 years ago a new kind of powder was discovered, known as the cocoa or slow-burning powder, from which by long chasing in the guns much better results were obtained than from the old powder. Nevertheless, expert opinions clung to the muzzle-loaders, and declined to sanction the introduction of a breech-loading system. Experiments went on, till at last it became clear that we should be hopelessly left behind by foreign nations unless we adopted breech-loaders, because the length of the gun necessary to fully utilize the slow-burning powder prevented the guns being loaded from the muzzle. We then took to breech-loaders in 1880, and we have had in the last seven years to concentrate an amount of labour which in other nations has been spread over three times that period. In dealing with questions of so experimental a character as those relating to the manufacture of big ordnance there must be a certain number of failures and mistakes. Our failures and mistakes were not greater nor more numerous than those of other nations, but they have been compressed within a much shorter period of time. At that time the gun factories were working under desperate pressure, in consequence of shipbuilding having been carried on with great rapidity. If the system of breech-loading ordnance had been introduced into the Navy earlier, more time would have been given to perfecting experiments; but, as it was, the result of incomplete experiments were precipitately embodied in the manufacture, and thus we have the cause of delay—vessels waiting for their guns now. Then the use of "liners" was introduced in the construction of a considerable number of guns. That answered very well for a certain time, and then there was a failure, and the whole of those guns had to be re-manufactured. My right hon. Friend the Secretary for War and I had to inquire during the past year in order to ascertain how this block could be re-

moved, and, if it were removed, whether the resources and producing power of this country are so large as to enable us to say with confidence no great number of ships would be detained for want of guns. In answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Preston I showed that by the end of the financial year 1889-90 all our ships requiring heavy ordnance would be supplied with their guns. The vessels of this year will be supplied with their guns, though there will be a delay of two months in the date of delivery. After that the block will be entirely removed. I speak as to the user, while my right hon. Friend speaks as to the manufacture, and we are both quite confident that for the future no block of the same character will occur, and that if orders are given in time, and if no change takes place in the designs during construction, the sources of production will hereafter be quite equal to our naval wants. I will undertake that the orders are given in time, and my right hon. Friend will undertake that there is no change in the designs after the guns have been ordered. Now, I wish to say a word on the subject of designs. We have a large number of ships which are coming on, and we wish to impose a test more effective than that of the measured mile and the ordinary experimental cruise, because we have formed certain opinions regarding their merits and defects, and are anxious that they should be thoroughly tested. We have had the advantage of the Naval Manœuvres, and that has fully confirmed the opinion we have formed, and all the vessels which we propose to build will be characterized by a high freeboard, more length, more engine room, and we shall avoid the error of endeavouring to cram too much accommodation into a small space. We have designed a new ship of war which shall not only be capable of fighting, but shall also give decent accommodation for the officers and men on board and in all weathers. So far as the question of design, construction, or armament is concerned, we can give every assurance that any increase of expenditure which may be sanctioned shall be given effect to in a prompt and business-like manner. I now turn to the exact number of ships which we propose to build, and the expenditure associated with them; but I do not propose to give the individual cost of each vessel, following the precedent set by Lord Northbrook in 1885, because, if we are to derive the benefit of the competing contractors, it is not advisable to give them too close a line as to their tenders. The number of ships which we consider should be added to Her Majesty's Navy in our new shipbuilding programme is 70, and their estimated cost, including armament, is £21,500,000. We propose to build eight first-class battle-ships, with a displacement of 14,000 tons; two second-class battle-ships, with a displacement of 9,000 tons; nine first-class protected cruisers, with a displacement of 7,300 tons; 29 second-class protected cruisers, of the *Medea* class, with a displacement of 3,400 tons; four smaller cruisers, of the *Pandora* class, with a displacement of 2,600 tons; and 18 torpedo gunboats, of the *Sharpshooter* type, with a displacement of 735 tons—making a total aggregate tonnage of 318,000 tons. As to the time each of these vessels will take to complete, the first-class battle-ships will be finished in from three and a-half to four years; the second-class battle ships in three years; the first-class cruisers in two and a-half years; the smaller cruisers in two years or somewhat less; and the gun vessels in one and a half year. Of the aggregate cost of £21,50 ,000 for these 70 vessels, the sum of £16,150,000 will be for engines and hulls, and £5,350,000 for the armaments. Dividing the sum of £21,500,000 into two portions, one of £11,500,000, and another of £10,000,000, the sum of £10,000,000 represents the work which we propose to put out to contract, and the £11,500,000 is the amount of work which we propose to assign to the Dockyards, and to absorb the charge for Ordnance included in the ordinary annual Estimates. The first sum of £10,000,000 will enable us to build, arm, and equip the following vessels:—Four battle-ships, five first-class cruisers, 17 second-class cruisers, and six torpedo gunboats—making a total of 32 vessels; and I propose to put the whole of these 32 vessels out to contract in the course of the present financial year. Funds for this expenditure will be raised by methods and under conditions which the Chancellor of the Exchequer will subsequently explain. If I find there is any tendency to run up prices against

the Admiralty, we may have to alter our decision as to the amount to be so expended; but, with that one reservation, we intend to put this amount of work out. For the purpose of building and completing the remaining 38 vessels and their armament there is £11,500,000. This sum, which is to be included in the ordinary Estimates, can be divided into two heads—£8,650,000 for construction of engines and hulls, and £2,850,000 for armament. We propose to lay down in the Dockyards this year 20 vessels, as follows:—Four battle-ships of the first class, one of the second class, three first-class cruisers, six second-class cruisers, and six torpedo gunboats. Adding these 20 to the 32 put out to contract, we have 52, leaving 18 out of the 70 still to be accounted for. They will be disposed as follows:—A second-class battle-ship will be laid down early in the financial year 1890-1, and the other vessels will take their places on the slips in the Dockyards as soon as they become vacant by the launch of the vessels laid down in the first year. The whole of the programme, including both Dockyard and contract work, is to be finished in four and a-half years from the date of the commencement of the first vessel. There is a naval and an administrative advantage in this distribution of work, to which I should like to call attention. Taking the programme as a whole, it consists of 70 ships, 10 of which are battle-ships and 60 cruisers of different types. A battle-ship takes very much longer to build than a cruiser—three and a-half or four years—and if they are to be finished within four and a-half years they must all be commenced in the first year. But a battle-ship when completed is not entirely efficient unless she has certain small vessels attached to her as scouts, and we consider that out of the 70 vessels 20 are the satellites of the battle-ships. The remaining 40 cruisers will be effective whether used in squadrons or individually. We propose to commence the construction of the whole of these this year, and thus make an immediate addition to the Navy of what it most requires. Later on, when an increase is made to our battle-ships, each battle-ship will be accompanied by two smaller vessels, and thus there will be no drain upon our force of independent cruisers. This enables us to carry out effectively the whole of our shipbuilding programme, and it also enables us to give continuous employment in the Dockyards, thus avoiding the great evils of a sudden expansion of business. In order to absorb the amount represented by this sum of £11,500,000, we raise the Shipbuilding Vote in the ordinary Estimates by £615,000, and reduce the Ordnance Vote by £400,000, because we intend to purchase all the Ordnance for the contract ships out of the £10,000,000 to which I have referred. If the Shipbuilding Vote be kept at the level at which we propose to put it, and the Ordnance Vote at the same level, there will be sufficient to provide for the whole of this work, as well as for all the work we have in hand and to complete in the period of four and a-half years. The Committee will observe the extreme rapidity with which we propose to build these ships. In France a battle-ship takes nearly ten years to complete. In this country, previous to 1885, ironclads took six years and large cruisers four years. We propose to lay down 70 vessels, including ten battle-ships, in four and a-half years. It is in the interests of economy that we make this proposal.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: Are the 70 vessels to be the total shipbuilding production of four years, or in addition to the ordinary estimated production, whatever takes place?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: No; perhaps I may explain. When Lord Northbrook made his proposals there were a large number of ships in the Dockyards which were in process of building, and what he did was to increase the existing shipbuilding programme by making certain additions to it. I stated that on April 1, 1890, there would only be four ships in Her Majesty's Dockyards and under contract, independent of this programme, which would not be complete. These four ships would be in the last stage of construction. After this year, therefore, the whole of the Naval Estimates are available to carry out this part of the programme.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: On the four years' Estimate?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: On the four years' Estimate. Rapidity of construction means economy, because delay occasions twofold waste—not only does

the ship cost more in construction, but the longer it is on the stocks the less is its life as an effective ship, and, therefore, the less use you get out of it. In order to insure rapidity of construction for the whole of these ships, contract as well as Dockyard ships, we propose to put them in an Act of Parliament in two Schedules, enacting that they shall be completed within the period I have mentioned—namely, by April, 1894. A special account will be kept of each of these vessels, and those accounts will be subject to the ordinary control of the Treasury and the Comptroller and Auditor General. In order that the Dockyards may not be subject to certain impediments which prevent the ships from being completed as rapidly as possible, we propose slightly to adjust the financial machinery in two essentials as regards excesses and balances of Votes. There is, perhaps, no practice, however laudable its pretensions, which results more in extravagance than the practice of surrendering to the Exchequer balances because the contractors have failed to deliver within a certain period. The liability remains, but the money goes back into the Exchequer, and goes to the reduction of the National Debt. It is practically a misappropriation of funds. The taxpayer is taxed one year for certain work, but because the contractor, through some unforeseen circumstances, is unable to deliver the work a day in advance of March 31, the money so raised goes back into the Exchequer, and next year the taxpayer is taxed again for the same purpose. That is not only unfair, but most prejudicial to economy. The unquestioned tendency in the Departments is to surrender as little as possible, and there are a number of devices by which attempts are made to reduce expenditure which would come into the next year by anticipating it, in order that in a subsequent year this deferred liability may be met without upsetting the departmental finance or the Estimates of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Therefore, the proposal we make is that balances in reference to shipbuilding should be retained. But we go further. There are certain articles and certain stores, such as armour plates and steel castings, which only a limited number of firms produce, and we must take these goods when we can get them. It is very likely that in dealing with transactions of this magnitude armour plates may be delivered sooner than anticipated, and heavy payments have to be made which would disorganize arrangements, and, therefore, provision is made for a temporary advance for the purpose of meeting any such payments, the advance being immediately repaid as soon as there was a surplus to the credit of the Department. We propose to allocate to new construction in the present financial year, 1889-90, £2,645,000; but only £1,360,000 is available for the new programme, the remainder goes to the completion of those ships still in hand. Next year, 1890-91, we propose to allocate £2,590,000 for new shipbuilding, and of that £2,340,000 will go to the new programme.

Captain PRICE (Devonport): Does that include contracts?

*Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: No. In 1891-2 we propose to allocate £2,560,000 to new construction, and the whole of that will go towards the new programme. Next year, 1892-3, we estimate that only £1,650,000 will be required, and in 1893-4, £740,000. These sums, in the aggregate, amount to £8,650,000. We propose in the same way to distribute the money necessary to arm these ships, and to make provision for it out of the ordinary Ordnance Vote. Adding that sum of £8,650,000 to the amount required for ordnance, which is £2,850,000, we get £11,500,000, which is the whole of the work we propose to put upon the Estimates. Therefore, summing up our scheme, it comprises the building of 70 vessels; it involves the expenditure of £10,000,000 out of the Special Fund, the nature of which my right hon. Friend will explain; and it involves an increase of £615,000 in the Shipbuilding Vote; but there will be a reduction of £400,000 in the Ordnance Vote, making a total increase of £215,000. I do not wish to anticipate the discussion on the ordinary Estimates, but there is certain work which we propose to take in hand, and which forms so essential a part of our shipbuilding policy that I must allude to it. There is a considerable number of our ironclads whose boilers are much worn. We propose to take all these vessels in hand and spread their

repairs over a number of years, on this principle—that as few vessels as possible should be laid up at one time. Certain of these vessels are worth re-engining, others are worth re-arming, so that in certain cases these vessels, re-boilered, re-engined, and re-armed, will be more efficient and powerful than on the day they were first commissioned. The vessels we propose to take in hand are the *Minatour*, *Achilles*, *Superb*, *Thunderer*, *Devastation*, and *Rupert*—they will all be taken in hand this year. Next year we shall deal with the *Hercules*, *Monarch*, *Sultan*, and *Invincible*. We propose also to thoroughly refit the *Nelson*, *Audacious*, and *Triumph*.

LORD C. BERESFORD: This year?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes, this year. That is included in the ordinary Shipbuilding Vote, which has been increased by £615,000. By taking these vessels in hand and repairing them we are enabled to do that which many sailors have long advocated. We shall be able to substitute in the next eight months four efficient amd sea-going ironclads for the four hulks which now carry the flags of the Commanders-in-Chief at Sheerness, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Queenstown. These vessels will have all their stores and all their coal on board, and they will be prepared at a moment's notice to go anywhere. This means a great addition to our reserves in the home waters. The only other increase in the ordinary Estimates worthy of note is in regard to the provision we make for improving the coaling facilities for our Fleet in the Channel. We also propose to dredge the Medway, so as to allow first-class ironclads with all their weights on board to pass down with the ordinary tide, which they cannot do now. We also propose to increase the Votes 1 and 2 by the sum of £275,000 for the purpose of adding 3,000 men besides those voted last year. These 3,000 men would comprise 1,100 marines, 1,000 stokers, and about 900 bluejackets. Including all these sums, they will show for the year commencing 1888-9 a total increase of £602,000 over the Naval Estimates of the preceding year. The Committee will naturally ask, does this increase on shipbuilding carry with it great progressive increases in future, so far as the expenditure on stores and men is concerned?—because I think it would be very unfair to get the Committee by a side wind to assent to an increase of one branch of expenditure without placing clearly before hon. Members the increase which that sanction entails in other branches of expenditure. On that point I can give satisfactory assurances to the Committee. We at present have sufficient men to man every available vessel, but when all these ships are completed we shall want a considerable additional number. While I think it most desirable to accumulate a large reserve of war vessels for an emergency, I do not think it would be reasonable to ask the Committee to vote all the money necessary to maintain sufficient men on the continuous service system to man all those vessels. A certain increase will be necessary, but that increase, spread over the next five years, will, I think, not amount to more than £250,000 in the aggregate. I propose, in conjunction with my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade, to turn attention to the development of the Naval Reserve. In the Naval Reserve you have most admirable material, and as our deficiencies are mainly under the heads of lieutenants and stokers, I have no doubt we shall be able to make some arrangements by which a very large proportion of those deficiencies can be supplied without a great addition to the Estimates. On the other hand, there will be a substantial contribution next year from Australia as an appropriation in aid; there would be, as the Committee will recollect, a decrease in the Shipbuilding Vote two or three years hence if the House were satisfied with the strength at which the Navy was maintained; and there would also be two or three years hence a considerable decrease in the Ordnance Votes. I am looking closely into the question of the reserves of ammunition. The proportion of reserves was fixed many years ago, when production was limited and slow. Now that production has rapidly increased, I do not think it advisable to keep large stores of perishable material. I hope I shall be able to make emergency contracts with the great firms who manufacture these articles, and, if so, we shall be able ultimately to accomplish a substantial reduction in our Ordnance Vote. Therefore, putting together all

these decreases, and putting against them the only prospective increase, I think I may say our scheme carries with it, as it approaches completion, a reduction rather than an increase of expenditure. I hope the Committee will now allow me to say a word or two upon that part of our work upon which we have bestowed most trouble and anxiety—namely, the preparation of designs of the respective types. Now, in preparing those designs, we were all very much impressed with the great difference between the requirements of the British Navy and those of foreign navies. The great mass of European navies are kept in peace time within inland seas, such as the Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean; with the exception of France, they have, outside Europe, few bases of operation. Now, vessels intended for short cruises require neither the sea-going qualities nor the coaling capacity which English ships must have. Therefore, if these qualities are to be obtained, our ships must be larger and larger; and if they are to be equal in armament and superior in speed, the coal-carrying capacity must necessarily be larger. The Committee will have noted the large dimensions of many of the ships we propose to build. We have ascertained that increase of size does not carry with it corresponding increase of expenditure; but it does carry with it a proportionate increase in the length of life of the vessel as an efficient fighting machine. We have, therefore, prepared our designs on that principle; and I will just very roughly state what they are. The torpedo-gunboat will be a vessel of 735 tons, with a raised deck forward, a speed of 21 knots, as against a tonnage of 550 and a speed of 18 knots of its predecessor, the *Rattlesnake*. The *Pandoras* are an exact reproduction of the vessels building for the Australian Colonies, which have given satisfaction to all who have examined their design. The improved *Medeas* are an enlargement upon the original *Medeas*. Their speed is the same, 20 knots; their armament is somewhat heavier; but they are 35 feet longer, and have 600 tons greater displacement. The first-class cruisers are vessels of 7,350 tons, as against 4,050 tons of the original *Mersey*, on which they may be regarded as an improvement. Their speed is three knots greater—namely, 20 knots. Every one of the above types represents a design which has either given satisfaction or is an improvement upon a well-known and satisfactory ship. I propose to-morrow to lay on the Table a Paper giving full particulars of our whole procedure. In the meantime, I will roughly summarize this Paper. The Select Committee on the Navy Estimates last year suggested that as regards the distribution of armour of battleships outside opinion should be called in. I very soon found out that the outside opinion wanted was not that of designers, but of naval officers, and especially of gunnery officers. I am fortunate enough to have at the Admiralty four officers, three of whom have held the post of Director of Naval Ordnance, and one now ably discharges the duties of that office, and in these four gentlemen I believe I have more technical knowledge as to Ordnance than can be found in any Admiralty in the world. We discussed the subject at very considerable length—what should be the distinctive features and qualities of the new battle ships, and we had a considerable number of alternative designs prepared, with their weights, showing what could be done, because the difficulty is not what is put in, but what you leave out. These were all worked out. I was anxious to get the best outside naval opinion I could get; and, therefore, I sent the designs to the three Admirals appointed to report on the Naval Manœuvres and to the two Commanders-in-Chief. Afterwards we met at the Admiralty and had a full discussion on the subject, a report of which will be found in a Parliamentary Paper; and I am glad to say we were almost unanimous in the decision at which we arrived. Roughly speaking, the disposition of armament is that of the *Admiral* class, though the number of guns is considerably greater, while the disposition of armour much more resembles that of the *Trafalgar* or the *Nile*. They are vessels of great coal and steaming capacity, with a high freeboard and a speed of 17½ knots. I believe they will give almost universal satisfaction to the Service, while as regards seagoing qualities they will be capable of being sent to any part of the world and in any weather. Just before I sit down there is one other

subject on which I should like to touch. Our scheme is naturally based on the nature of the work which in an emergency our Navy will have to do. The area to be covered and the duties to be performed are so great and various that I should like roughly to indicate to the Committee the distribution of that work and the means by which we hope to carry it out. Our first duty will be so to dispose of our Fleets that our coasts should be defended from invasion and our naval stations from bombardment, and this disposition should be carried out on wide and general lines for the protection of commerce. These duties must be exclusively performed by the regular ships of Her Majesty's Navy. The second branch of the subject is the protection of our commerce on certain trade routes. The great bulk of this work also must be done by the Navy, but the armed cruisers of the mercantile marine can be associated with the Navy in the discharge of that duty. I am sorry to see in quarters where I least expected them depreciatory observations made as to the inferiority of the merchant cruiser, on the ground that it would not be a match for a war vessel of the same size. Of course they are not a match for a war vessel of the same size; if they were there would be no object in having war cruisers. But they will be more than a match for any cruiser of the same character, and in all those movements of dogging the footsteps of a foreign cruiser embarrassing a foe, and keeping touch with a squadron that has broken blockade, they will be absolutely invaluable. I advocate the extension of the system on still higher grounds. The discipline of the mercantile marine is every year improving, and I believe it is very much to the advantage alike of the mercantile marine and of the Navy that they should be brought together, and I trust the House will always insist on that being one of the primary features of Admiralty policy. I turn now to the third question, on which there has been a great deal of agitation, and particularly in the neighbourhood of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Morley), namely, the question of local defence, and I will only deal with that portion of it which is known as the floating defence, because my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War will be able to give an explanation in regard to the land defences. Now, we asked the commercial ports to co-operate with us in the discharge of this duty, and they willingly complied. The primary duty of the Navy, in my judgment, is to prevent attacks being made upon the commercial ports. Their secondary duty is to co-operate with the land forces in the event of an attack. Now the gentlemen we asked to co-operate in that secondary duty attached to that co-operation conditions which would have fettered us in the discharge of our primary duty. They wished us to station certain war vessels at different ports and leave them there in time of war. We could not assent to such an arrangement, because if we made it in time of peace it would not be worth anything in time of war. There is some limit to the amount of money for naval purposes which Parliament can vote, and the more that money is locked up in vessels stationed at different ports of the coast, the less remains for the general defence of the country and the Empire. If our naval supremacy were seriously impaired no system of local defence, however efficient, would give protection to the country. On the other hand, if our supremacy is maintained, no serious attack will be made upon these ports. We were asked to provide material in the shape of ships and guns for those ports, which were to be manned by Naval Volunteers. Now, ships and guns cost a great deal of money, and being complicated machines they require a complete training on the part of the *personnel* before they can be properly handled, and in my judgment, it would be a sheer waste of money and power to spend large sums in supplying those ships to be manned by comparatively untrained men. The Volunteer system has worked well so far as the land forces are concerned; it has become a fairly effective Reserve at a small cost, but I cannot say quite the same of the Naval Volunteer system. I admire the self-sacrifice and the patriotism which animate the members of that force in going through the tests which the Admiralty imposes. But the great bulk of the Naval Volunteers are not seafaring men. They know little or nothing of gunnery; they have also to get their sea legs on and become seamen. It is impossible for any volunteer to sustain the strain and

test of such a training. I do not want to have any force which is merely a force upon paper and which has no assigned duties to perform in our system of national and naval defence; and at present our Naval Volunteers are not available for land purposes; they are not under the Secretary of State for War, and from their inability to go through the necessary training they are not available for sea purposes. I have a proposal to make, and take this opportunity of mentioning it. There is in all these commercial ports a considerable number of small vessels—tugs, passenger steamers, and others—which are quite strong enough to carry a modern gun of considerable size. These are manned by captains and men who know every inch of the coast and the water in the neighbourhood. You have there the very material you want in time of war. I am quite ready to consider a proposition if the ports would co-operate, by which the Admiralty would discuss with them the terms of a capitation grant for men and some assistance towards the hire of vessels which may be passed as efficient, the Admiralty supplying the inspection and instruction, and the guns and material. I believe in this way that we should get in each locality a good nucleus of small vessels—an effective and respectable flotilla manned by seafaring men. I make the suggestion, because I do not want to shut the door to any self-sacrificing patriotism developed in the Naval Volunteers; but I do want to get some better return for our money than we now get. Well now, Sir, I have completed my Statement and I have only one more word to say. The House, I think, will gather from the nature of the details, as well as from the principles which I have enunciated, that our scheme is the result of a somewhat slow and laborious investigation. We have been many months at work on this scheme. In one sense we had to embody all the requirements of the Navy. We had then so to adjust them and to spread them over a series of years that we might not make too great a demand on any particular class of article which is difficult of production and might arrest our progress and prevent our shipbuilding from proceeding with rapidity. We have turned this scheme over and over again, and looked at it from different points of view. We believe that if the House assents to our proposals and the provisions contained in this Bill founded on the resolution which will shortly be read from the Chair—we believe that we can complete this scheme at the cost we have given and in the given time. There is no branch of the Service or any want of the Service which, we believe, has been overlooked. Therefore our scheme must stand or fall as a whole. A portion of it cannot be cut out without affecting the efficiency of the scheme as an entire scheme. In asking the Committee to give impartial consideration to these proposals, I am afraid I shall appeal in vain to one portion of this House. There is a powerful section of public opinion in the country, ably represented in this House, which objects to all expenditure on the Army and Navy. I so far sympathize with the object of these hon. Gentlemen as to assure them that, if ever they can get Foreign Governments to adopt their principles, no body of men will rejoice more at their success than the Government for the time-being of Her Majesty. But until they do so succeed, they cannot expect that this country should be the only country to ignore the first instincts of self-preservation. The late Prime Minister on the first night of this Session somewhat cavilled at our definition of our scheme of increased expenditure as coming under the head of precaution rather than of warlike preparation. I think the word "precaution" is a just one, and is capable of being sustained. What do we ask this increase of naval force for? It is for the protection of home and domestic interests alone. Our commerce and our shipbuilding are among the oldest of the hereditary industries of this country. It is through them that many industries have been brought into existence and fostered, and it is by the maintenance of that commerce alone that that huge industrial system of employment, which exists in this country, can be sustained, and which alone enables 35 millions of people to live within these islands. Then, will this scheme lead to increased expenditure on the part of foreign nations? I think not. We do not attempt in any way to vie with foreign nations in the magnitude of their land forces. Our whole social and constitutional system and policy are utterly opposed to any

such competition. But if, on the other hand, there should be any foreign nation which should wish to encroach upon us, or to invade our naval supremacy, we have so framed our scheme as to bring into world-wide prominence the incomparable power of this country and its enormous resources. The scheme which I have laid before the House is one which I do not think all the Dockyards of Europe would complete in the time we propose; and if there are any nations abroad who do wish to compete with us in naval armaments, the mere enunciation of this scheme will show to them the utter futility of their desire. I am aware that in one instance I stand at a great disadvantage, compared with my predecessor, Lord Northbrook, when he made similar proposals to Parliament. In that year, 1885, a great constitutional question had been settled, and the leaders of both parties of the State were then in conference, in order to give effect to that great change. Now a wide constitutional difference irreconcilably separates on one particular question the two great parties of the State. Still, I have noticed with great satisfaction that right hon. Gentlemen opposite, while admitting their differences with us so far as the methods of the internal government of the Empire are concerned, have over and over again asserted that if any external question should arise affecting either the safety or integrity of the Empire, all these differences would to a large extent be diminished if they did not vanish altogether. Therefore, while I do not ask right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite to in any way abandon their legitimate rights of criticism which their administrative knowledge and political position fully entitle them to make on a scheme of this great magnitude, I feel sure I can rely upon their approaching this question of national defence from a broad and patriotic standpoint, and that they will discuss our scheme upon its merits in a fair and impartial manner. It is in that sense I have endeavoured to explain the scheme, and it is in that sense, I trust, the discussion will be continued and the proposals of Her Majesty's Government considered.

Motion made and Question proposed:

"That it is expedient that a sum not exceeding £21,500,000 be granted for the purpose of building, arming, equipping, and completing for sea, vessels for Her Majesty's Navy; and that it is expedient that a sum not exceeding £10,000,000 be issued out of the Consolidated Fund in seven years ending the 31st of March, 1896; and that a sum not exceeding £11,500,000 be issued out of the moneys to be provided by Parliament for the Naval Service during the five financial years ending the 31st of March, 1894."

LORD R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Before the Chancellor of the Exchequer rises to speak, there are one or two Questions which I should like to address to him as representing the Government, and which it might be of material benefit to the Government should be answered categorically. I rise rather in the interests of the Government than of the House. I have no doubt it has been telegraphed all over Europe by this time, and that every General and Admiral of every foreign Power is informed that Great Britain is about to spend £21,000,000 on its Navy. That no doubt is an announcement which may cause some surprise, and in some foreign quarters some consternation. I also think it is an announcement calculated to startle the public mind of this country. But it is for the purpose of preventing the public mind from being over-startled, and of preventing Foreign Powers from being over alarmed, that I rise to make a few interrogatory remarks, addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has spoken at great length; and the result of the speech and of all the noble sentiments which it contains, and the eloquent appeal which the noble Lord made to the patriotism of both sides of the House to spend money on the defences of the country—the result of it all is, and I think I can prove it, subject to the correction of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that for the next four years a sum rather under £1,000,000 is to be added to the Navy Estimates. I will explain to the Chancellor of the Exchequer what I mean. The noble Lord stated that he was going to ask the House to consent to an expenditure in the Dockyards in the next four years on shipbuilding and armaments of £11,500,000. The House will recollect that last year the vote for shipbuilding amounted to £4,250,000, so that, if the noble Lord had stated that he was going to ask the House to pledge itself to maintain the expenditure of last year on

shipbuilding for the next four years, he would have committed the House to an expenditure of £17,000,000.

LORD G. HAMILTON: No.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: I am afraid that the noble Lord does not follow me. I say that if he had asked the House to pledge itself to spend for the next four years the same amount which it spent last year on shipbuilding, the amount which the House would have been committed to would have been £17,000,000.

LORD G. HAMILTON: No.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: I make these remarks for the purpose of eliciting information, and for the sake of correction, if necessary. The sum voted last year under the three heads of the Shipbuilding Vote was £4,250,000. Multiply that by four, and we get £17,000,000. But the noble Lord only proposes to spend upon the Shipbuilding Vote in the next four years £11,500,000. Therefore, as far as the Shipbuilding Vote is concerned, there is a reduction of expenditure made by the noble Lord of the difference between £11,500,000 and £17,000,000—that is to say, a difference of £5,500,000, and consequently a reduction of expenditure upon the Navy to that amount. But to the £11,500,000 we must add the £10,000,000 which the noble Lord proposes to commit the House to at once, making a total expenditure of £21,500,000 as against the £17,000,000, which the Estimates would have shown if the amount of the Shipbuilding Vote for last year had been maintained for four years. So that the actual difference between the expenditure entailed by the proposals of the noble Lord, and the expenditure that would have been entailed if the Estimates of last year had been maintained for four years, is a sum of £4,500,000. The noble Lord, I see, dissents from that view. Well, if it is not the case, it is not owing to any mistake in my figures; it must be owing to some inadequacy of explanation on the part of the First Lord of the Admiralty, which perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to set right. Therefore, I say the difference made by the noble Lord's proposal is a little over a million a year added to the Navy Estimates for the next four years. Against that must be set the appropriation in aid from Australia, and possibly some other appropriations, which will probably bring the sum to a little under £1,000,000 a year, as far as I gather from the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty. Then, as I understand it, contracts are to be entered into by the Government to the extent of £10,000,000, and future Parliaments will not be able to get out of those contracts. As to the £11,500,000 which is to be expended in the Dockyards, it seems to me that it is quite unnecessary for the House to consider that at all. All the House has to consider out of it is the Shipbuilding Vote this year, and it is utterly impossible for the noble Lord to pledge the House to expend in the future £7,500,000 on shipbuilding. Even if it is done by Statute it has not the smallest binding effect on Parliament; and all discussion now on future expenditure on the Navy under the head of shipbuilding will be entirely supererogatory. I venture to submit to the noble Lord and to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it would be a great waste of time. There seems to me to be nothing whatever in the scheme of the noble Lord propounded to-night—interesting though it was in parts—which ought not to have been said in the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty on the Naval Estimates last year. I can see nothing whatever in what has been laid before the House which in any way differs from the usual annual statement, except that this year we are to have two long speeches instead of one. What I want to know from the Chancellor of the Exchequer is this. Is the resolution which has just been read a resolution which is to be embodied in legislation? Obviously if it is, we are committing the House to a series of stages on a matter which is practically beyond our power; we are trying to pledge the House to spend money this year, next year, and the year after, by which time another Parliament may have come into existence, and which may not agree to it. What is the practical use of passing a Bill through its Committee and Third Reading stages which cannot have a binding effect upon future Parliaments? Therefore, Sir, in the interests of the Government, having regard to the effect which this announcement of the expenditure of £21,000,000 may have upon foreign Powers, as well as upon this country, and to reduce that sum to what is its

right proportion for the present year, and in the interests of this House to prevent its time being wasted on a resolution which can have no binding power whatever beyond the actual Session in which the resolution is passed—in these two interests, I do make an appeal to the Government to explain fully: first, the exact amount by which the Naval Estimates for the next four years will be increased; and, second, what possible necessity there is for exceptional legislation on the subject, and whether it cannot be dealt with on the ordinary votes.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I am not sorry that the noble Lord has risen, because I perfectly agree with him that it is most important that there should be no misconception whatever either as regards the amounts or as regards the policy of Her Majesty's Government in these proposals. The proposals are no doubt extremely important; but we do not wish them to be alarming. We have no desire that it should go forth all over Europe that there is any disposition on the part of this country to take exaggerated action. But we do desire that it should go forth to all parts of the world that we have the power and the intention of adding during the next four year 70 ships to Her Majesty's Navy. I will deal in the first place with the second part of the remarks which were made by the noble Lord. He says—and of course there is some truth in the view—that we have no binding power over other Parliaments. We do not claim it; but what we desire to do is this—and it is a new departure—we desire to take the House of Commons into our confidence not as regards bits of ships or parts of guns, but so that the House shall have the whole plan before it, and with its eyes open, shall commit itself or not commit itself to the programme which Her Majesty's Government submit. Now I will illustrate for the noble Lord what is our view by pointing out to him what we wish to avoid. We desire to avoid this, that when these ships are once begun, no change of plan on the part of the Admiralty or on the part of a succeeding Government or Parliament should cause the programme to be stopped or delayed unless a decision to alter it were deliberately arrived at by Parliament. We do not wish to see again what we have seen before—ships being built without their guns being made, and ships being built which take six years to complete, and which, therefore, are not ready when they are wanted, or only when the emergency is past. The Bill will enact that a certain sum of money shall be allocated to this programme year by year. Of course, if in future Parliaments or future Sessions you choose to revoke the programme, you can do so; but it is a different thing to revoke a decision to which the majority of the House will be parties, and to revoke an ordinary decision of Government. It has happened over and over again that in one Session of Parliament a certain amount of money has been voted for ships that were wanted with the intention that they should be completed in a certain time; and that a new House of Commons, or a new Board of Admiralty or the same Board has changed its views, and has delayed the progress of the ships, and therefore put out the whole of the programme which the House had desired to be completed. That is the view which we take. We wish to insure a regular naval programme for years to come. I heard the noble Lord use the phrase, during the speech of my noble Friend, "It is a four years naval programme."

LORD R. CHURCHILL: A four year's Estimate?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, it is; but in this shape, that the House commits itself to the plan as a whole. It is our desire—though it is open to right hon. Gentlemen opposite and to the noble Lord to object—not to leave the programme subject to the whims of inventors and to the different exigencies of successive Governments, so that we may not see, what we have seen before, the programme finally not carried out. I wish to insure, as Chancellor of the Exchequer no less than as a Member of the Government, that these ships shall be built straightway, according as they are ordered; that they shall not be changed during the process of their construction; that the Ordnance shall not be revised as every step goes on, as often has been the case; but that we may have the authority of Parliament for insisting that this programme as submitted to the Committee of the House shall be carried out. The noble Lord noticed, I

presume, the passage in the speech of my noble Friend, in which he pointed out that what we wanted to secure was regularity of expenditure over a number of years. If you have no settled programme you cannot do the work so economically. We do not wish that if money is not spent in one year it should be surrendered to the Exchequer, or that the First Lord of the Admiralty should be driven to force the pace of contracts, often at a great waste of money, in order to spend a given sum in a particular year; but we desire that there should be a regularity of expenditure over the whole time. I now come to the other point in the speech of the noble Lord, in which he made a mistake, which he will be glad to have pointed out to him. The noble Lord made a division between the whole of the Shipbuilding Vote and that part of the Vote which is devoted to new construction. He spoke of the addition made to the Shipbuilding Vote, and he said that the total the Government was going to spend on new ships was £11,500,000.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: What I said was this—that the expenditure last year in the Estimates on the Shipbuilding Vote was £4,280,000. If the noble Lord had proposed to maintain that amount for four years he would have committed the House to spend a sum of £17,000,000, instead of which he proposed that a Committee of this House should vote an expenditure of £11,500,000.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes, but the Vote for shipbuilding will go on as heretofore. The sum devoted to new construction will be £11,500,000, and the whole of the rest will go on precisely as before. The noble Lord multiplied the whole of the Vote by four, instead of multiplying only that portion which is devoted to new construction. The noble Lord says "No." I wish to make this thoroughly clear to the House. The Shipbuilding Vote will continue to be £4,500,000. Of that a portion has been hitherto devoted to the repairs and the business of the yards, and a similar portion will continue to be so devoted; the remainder will be £2,600,000, devoted to new construction. The new construction spread over the four or five years would amount to £11,500,000.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: Speaking in round numbers, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has, as I understand, said that Vote 8 this year will be nearly £7,000,000.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: I am sorry I am unable to make it clear to the noble Lord. Well, I must try again. The Shipbuilding Vote is divided practically into two parts. One part is for the ordinary repairs of ships, and for the thousand duties which are performed in the yards independently of new construction. The £4,500,000 which the noble Lord referred to includes those ordinary duties. The sum thus spent is the difference between £2,600,000 and the £4,500,000.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer tell us in round figures the amount of Vote 8 this year? Then we shall understand it.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: £4,500,000?

Lord R. CHURCHILL: That is the amount of Vote 8, including contracts.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: Including contracts for engines for the Dockyards. It includes £2,600,000 for new construction, and that £2,600,000 annually for between four and five years gives 11½ millions. The noble Lord has really introduced an obscurity into this Question which was unnecessary. I must say that a clearer statement than that which the First Lord of the Admiralty made I have seldom listened to. But I rose, not only for the purpose of answering the Questions which were put by the noble Lord, but to explain to the House the general financial proposals of Her Majesty's Government. This conversation, I hope, has cleared up the question of shipbuilding in the yards. The £11,500,000 includes Ordnance, which is to be placed in the Dockyards. It remains to deal with the £10,000,000 which are to stand outside the annual Estimates and which we would call the Naval Defence Fund. It will be extremely interesting, I expect, to the House to know how we propose to raise this money. I will say at once that we do not propose to raise it by a loan. We do not think it would be right to spread the cost of this special effort, which is being made for four or five years, over very many years, and over different generations of taxpayers. We think that if it is the duty of the country to make this effort, the present taxpayers must take upon themselves the burden of carrying through the proposals laid before the House. The House will see that

one of our aims is to have regularity of expenditure. Those ships which are to be paid for out of the £10,000,000 are to be put out to contract, and right hon. Gentlemen opposite who have been at the Admiralty may know how difficult it is to ascertain the precise sum to be spent annually by contractors. We wish to equalize the payment, which should be made every year over a certain number of years. It would be most inconvenient for the purpose of taxation if one year we had to put on a tax in order to meet the large demands which the contractors might make, and immediately afterwards to reduce the taxation and have again to raise it. We, therefore, are anxious to secure a regular payment over a certain number of years to meet this £10,000,000 of expenditure, and the conclusion at which we have arrived—I trust it will not alarm the Committee—is to divide the sum of £10,000,000 by seven, and to pay £1,430,000 annually out of taxation in order to complete the £10,000,000 for which we ask. I will acknowledge that this is a considerable demand that we make on the taxpayers of the country. I think it will be admitted that we have gone very far in endeavouring to meet this large sum in a manner which will show that we do not shrink from appealing to the taxpayers for a purpose which they have so much at heart. The taxpayers of seven years hence will have the whole of those 30 ships which are to be built by contract paid for and ready without having to contribute anything towards them. I hope it will commend itself to the sense of the Committee that seven years is a fair range over which to spread this expenditure. We propose to arrange that £1,430,000 should be paid every year into this fund. If and when the demands of the contractors in a given year exceed the sum of £1,430,000 we propose to borrow on Exchequer Bonds and Treasury Bills the amount necessary to meet the demands of the contractors, and to endeavour in that way to equalize the expenditure year after year. The interest on such temporary loans will be put on the Navy Estimates of the year. In no case would it be a very large sum. It is generally not in the first and second years that the demands are largest, but rather in the third or fourth year; and I do not think there will be any considerable burden thrown on the Estimates in respect of interest. I can assure the House that when the proper time comes to defend our proposals, from whatever quarter they are attacked, I shall not shrink from doing so, because I have not assented lightly to this expenditure. I feel that it is a very heavy responsibility, which, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I have taken in assenting to so large a burden being placed on the people. The Navy Estimates will be increased by £600,000 a year, and there will be paid annually towards the £10,000,000 £1,430,000. We shall ask the taxpayers of the country to pay £1,400,000 extra for the next seven years over and above the sum of £600,000 extra for the next four years for the Shipbuilding Vote. The House will see that we have not shrunk from trying to meet the demands made upon us by an appeal to the patriotism and the self-sacrificing spirit of those in whose interest we believe this large outlay is necessary.

*Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I think, Sir, after the two statements we have now heard that we see exactly where we are. If I understand correctly we shall have to raise additional taxation for the purposes of the Navy to the extent of rather more than £2,000,000 a year for the next four or five years, to be reduced, if the Navy Estimates allow, by £600,000 for two years more. I think, therefore, that when the First Lord of the Admiralty said that the scheme looked rather to a reduction than to an increase in the naval charge he was a little sanguine as to what would come from the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few minutes afterwards. I assume to-night that we shall not express any opinion whatever in reference to this scheme. It has been customary on these occasions to ask information from the Government as to details which have not been clearly or carefully expressed; but I think now we understand the proposal perfectly clearly, and that there is no misconception as to its main outlines. I wish to ask one or two questions without any opinion on the merits of the proposal. I should like to understand this. The noble Lord said that 70 ships are proposed to be added to the Navy within the next four-and-a-half years. How many ships *per contra* will become

obsolete in all probability, or will for other reasons pass out of the service of the Navy during the time? The number in some years has been 10, 12, and even 13, and, therefore, it will be well to know what will be the net addition to the Navy under the scheme of the noble Lord. Then I also think it would be well if the House could have the two statements of the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in print.

*MR. GOSCHEN: You will have the Bill.

*MR. CHILDERS: The Bill will not give the House the amount of information needed; and, therefore, I hope, in accordance with almost invariable custom, there will be no objection on the part of the Government to put before the House a Memorandum showing in detail the plan of the noble Lord I think that that is absolutely necessary for purposes of effective discussion. Then there is another subject on which perhaps a Return is desirable. The noble Lord has described the general effect of Lord Northbrook's scheme. I think it would expedite the general discussion if we could have the outcome of that scheme before us. The House ought to have a Return laid before it showing precisely the whole of Lord. Northbrook's scheme as worked out by the Government, so that we may be able to compare the working of that scheme with the working of the scheme of the present First Lord of the Admiralty. The two plans follow each other as proposals for bringing the strength of the Navy up to a certain point, and without some such Returns as I have indicated, it will be impossible for us thoroughly to understand the effect of the scheme. It would be of no use going into the details of the noble Lord's plan at present, but as soon as any Questions have been asked and answered on this occasion which may be necessary to elucidate the proposals of the noble Lord, a future day should be fixed for the discussion of the scheme as a whole, when the House may be thoroughly prepared to deal with it. I will only say that the proposal of the noble Lord is an extremely important one, and I trust that every hon. Member will satisfy himself thoroughly about it and understand all its details. For these reasons I forbear to offer the smallest piece of criticism upon it on the present occasion.

*LORD C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): Mr. Chairman, as I have taken a somewhat prominent part in the country on the Question of the Naval Defences, I wish to say that I am not now going to discuss the noble Lord's scheme, but rather to state my own position as to these matters. I have often endeavoured to bring before the country the state of the Fleet and given my opinion of what addition to it is necessary, basing my opinion on statistics, facts, and arguments. But in every statement that I have made I have always put this point before the House and the country —that whatever addition, large or small, we make to the Fleet, it should be done in a business-like way and upon a definite principle. Now I am sorry to say that the noble Lord has not brought forward any clear and definite reason for what is proposed by the Government. I cannot for a moment object to an addition to the Fleet, but I think what is proposed is very much of a phantom addition. It is all very well for the noble Lord to say that he is going to add 70 ships to the Fleet, but he must put down what is the waste of the Fleet and what ships are obsolete. He ought to tell us what is the reason that the Government come down and asked for this extension of the Fleet. I have always held that the requirements of the country should be made out by the Cabinet. They should call on the experts to say how our trade and commerce and our import of raw material is to be defended, and the experts should give their reasons for what they recommend. I do not say that the First Lord of the Admiralty should go by what the experts say, but the First Lord ought to be directly responsible for why he does not do so. In my humble opinion this addition to the Fleet will be like that under Lord Northbrook, unless there is somebody made responsible for the ships not being as they ought to be. At this moment there is nobody responsible for the proposed addition to the Fleet being enough to bring the Navy up to the proper standard. I wish to get a definite basis to work upon. The House ought to be responsible. At present it is not. Take the case of the Estimates On certain Votes coming on the Government say, "We must have these Votes

to-night, because the men are waiting for their money." That is very hard on the supporters of the Government; we are obliged to curtail our debate, and not make our views public. I wish to make the House responsible for the standard of the Fleet, so that we may avoid these periodical scares and panics. In order, therefore, to get a definite basis to work upon I shall on some future occasion move—

"That in the opinion of this House the Fleet of England should be able to defend its coasts, its commerce, and its trade, to insure the punctual and certain delivery of its supply of food and raw material, as well as to secure the safety of the Colonies against the fleets of two Powers combined."

I would go so far as to say that one of those Powers should be France. Let us disabuse our minds of the idea that this is an aggressive step. I have lately had a very interesting cruise about Europe, and have seen some of the most distinguished men in Europe, both soldiers and sailors, and their opinion is that the intention of our Government to increase the Fleet is a friendly idea, showing that we are at least going to look after our own interests. Parties in the House are much divided on the question of Home Rule, but they are not divided on the question that the country ought to be properly defended. But in my opinion it is not a wise method—it is a method which the Government will wreck themselves upon if they bring proposals of this sort forward without giving definite reasons why they do it. I do not care whether it is a question of a hundred millions or two millions, or of 70 ships or of four ships. So little do I wish to aggravate the panic or scare that I would honestly prefer to wait another year and do the thing in a proper, business-like manner, and let the people understand how the defences stand, than to proceed in a haphazard way, without any definite reason being given to the public why these proposals are made.

SIR E. REED (Cardiff): It is not my intention to discuss the proposal of the Government to-night, but I desire to ask a Question on a point which I consider to be one of very considerable importance. Both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Admiralty have pointed out the great importance of having a settled programme with regard to ships. The First Lord of the Admiralty has said that the whole of the ships to be built by contract are to be at once, or as soon as practicable, contracted for. Is that statement to apply to the Ordnance for the ships? It certainly would be most extraordinary if, when the character of Ordnance is changing almost daily, we were to commit ourselves to the armament, at any rate to the minor armament, of all these vessels. I am at a loss to understand why we should do it. With regard to the general question, it appears to me that we are in a most favourable position for discussion. A Resolution has been proposed to-night, the debate on which, I understand, is to be adjourned. Then it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill which, of course, will have to be read a First, Second, and Third time. In addition, the Navy Estimates are to be presented, so that there will be ample opportunity offered for discussion of the programme of the Government.

*MR. ATKINSON (Boston): Mr. Chairman, I am very glad to find that the criticism of this scheme has come from the Government side of the House—from the two noble Lords who have just preceded me. That presages the fact that this Question is to be taken out of the rut of party politics in the same way as the Temperance Question was a short time ago. I feel there will be no fear of any Government wrecking itself upon this Question because "none will be for Party, but all be for the State." Personally, having no Party ties at all, having been for more than 40 years connected with the shipping of this country, I feel justified in expressing an opinion on the plan which has been so plainly and ably explained to the House by the First Lord of the Admiralty. Some of the Hon. Members who have spoken have complained that they are unable to understand the Government's scheme. Now, I think it is perfectly clear, and I believe that the public and the nation generally will understand what is proposed, and will look upon the scheme as a very moderate one under the circumstances and one deserving approval. It is no answer to complain that past First Lords of the Admiralty have made bad bargains. It is only the duty of

the Ministry in power to place the Navy on a proper footing. If we had annual Parliaments, as some hon. Members opposite desired, the First Lord of the Admiralty would be continually re-arranging his Estimates in order that he might appeal to the public for support, on the ground of economy, on the Administration going out and wishing to come in again. But the present First Lord of the Admiralty and the Chancellor of the Exechequer have done nothing of the kind. They have proposed a plan which they believe it is absolutely necessary to carry into effect in the interests of the nation, and I am sure that their conduct will meet with universal approval. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am proud to say, has nothing to lose by his proposal; he is not likely to lose in popularity, and even if he does, he can afford to do so, seeing what a great success he had last year with his Stock Conversion Scheme. I am thoroughly satisfied with the proposal, and I believe the country also will be satisfied with it. There are however, one or two points, to which I wish to call the attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the readiness of merchants and ship-owners to organize themselves as volunteers for coast defences. Some of these men who have proved ready to give their time, money and labour in this cause are very dissatisfied with the manner in which they have been treated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by those who have charge of the public purse. I hope that the Government in connection with this matter will see what additional assistance they can give these men. The other point to which I wish to refer is the recruiting for the Navy. I have for 40 years been connected with Industrial Schools, and I have often found that some of the boys are anxious to go into the Navy after they have for a time been in training ships, but the Admiralty fail to appreciate the difference between boys committed to the Industrial Schools, and boys committed to Reformatory Schools. They do not seem to realize the fact that boys might be sent to an Industrial School without ever having associated with criminals, or without ever having been in prison. I hold that the Admiralty ought to give such boys an opportunity of passing into the Navy, especially as we know from experience in connection with the Southampton training ship at Hull that better boys can not be got anywhere. On behalf of the mercantile and shipping community, with which I have been connected for 30 or 40 years, and for which I have done public work during the whole of that time, I wish again to say that I hope the Government scheme will meet with great success. It is the duty of hon. Members to strengthen the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and of the First Lord of the Admiralty, so as to enable them to perform their duties without Party bias and to place the Navy in such a position as to fit it to defend the privileges of this great nation. I hope that more will be done in the future than has been done in the past in the direction of safe-guarding our commerce. I think the Government deserve credit for the arrangements they made for subsidising the Cunarders and the P. and O. boats. The First Lord of the Admiralty has expressed surprise that he has not received the support in some quarters which he might have expected. I think, however, the mistake has been in not subsidizing more of the private shipowners. Employment is quite as acceptable to a private shipowner as to a Company, and many of them have vessels most suitable for the work. I shall support the scheme from one end to the other, and whenever it is brought before the House I trust that it will be carried by a great majority.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): The object with which I rise is not for the present to criticise the proposals of the Government, but, if possible, to obtain a little more information in regard to them. Personally, I feel greatly indebted to the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) for the questions he has put to the First Lord of the Admiralty; but I wish to know whether we are really to understand that the taxpayers will be called upon to expend £1,430,000 for seven years, and £600,000 for another four years?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Let me clear up the point at once. The taxpayers are to be called upon to pay towards the £10,000,000 £1,430,000 annually for the next seven years, and on the ordinary Naval Estimates our pro-

posals will involve an increase of £600,000 for the next four years—not for a further four years beyond the seven, but for the next four years. Therefore, in the next four years, there will be an increase of expenditure amounting to about £2,000,000, and in the three years succeeding an increase of £1,430,000.

*Mr. CREMER: One other Question I desire to address to the Government. We have had statements made on many hands as to the relative strength of the Navies of foreign countries. I presume the Government are in possession of the actual facts, and I feel that it would greatly simplify matters if the Government would favour the House with the facts at their disposal. Within the last few weeks an important statement from the Marine Department in France has been laid before the Chamber of Deputies. This, for instance, might very properly be laid before the House.

*Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I think that if the hon. Gentleman will refer to a Return granted last year upon the motion of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) he will there obtain all the information he desires.

Captain PRICE (Devonport): I desire to ask one or two Questions, because I do not feel quite clear as to the statement made this evening. I want it to be made out exactly to what extent we are going to spend the money of the taxpayers in addition to the ordinary expenditure under the Naval Estimates. I do not think we have exactly got that as yet. We have got it very clearly as far as the Dockyards are concerned, but not with regard to contract work. I understand £10,000,000 is to be spent, and that the repayment of that money is to be spread over seven years. But is that £10,000,000 to be spent on contract ships in addition to what is ordinarily spent upon the Contract Vote? If that is not so, how are we to guarantee that any money will be asked for by the Admiralty under the Contract Vote? If nothing is asked for by them we shall be only spending £10,000,000 in seven years, which would not amount to anything more than we have been spending hitherto. Now when the noble Lord at the commencement of his speech laid down the standard he did—which I think is a very fair standard, and one generally accepted in the country and in this House as a fair one—I came to the conclusion that it was not an extravagant proposal. Indeed, I should rather say it is a very moderate one. I mean, that the Fleet of this country ought to be equal at the very least to two of the largest fleets in Europe. I thought he was then going to tell the House to what extent it was necessary to add to our Fleet to put it in that condition. I understood him—and I think the Committee must have understood him when he first spoke—to be of opinion that we require 70 ships to put us in that position. There is not one of the experts who have been putting their views before the country lately who have taken even such a moderate estimate as that. Are we to understand from the noble Lord that it is necessary for us to have 70 ships of the kind he describes to put us in the position of being equal to the fleets of two other Powers? But these 70 ships are to be built in four years, and meanwhile other Governments are going on with their shipbuilding. I should like to know this. If the Government had not come down with this programme, how many ships would be built in these four years under the ordinary Estimates? The extra expenditure is to be £600,000 for four years on contract work. What is that in excess of the ordinary Contract Vote? We have not got the figures yet. We are told that the sum of 10 millions is to be spent in four years; but are we to go on spending each year the ordinary amount of late years, on building ships by contract? Let us have it stated clearly; it is a point that has been omitted. Will the Government, so far as they can, pledge themselves—give an assurance—that the ordinary expenditure on the Contract Vote shall go on for the next four years in addition to the 10 millions on extraordinary contract shipbuilding?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford Central): Will the noble Lord say what increase his proposals will make under the head of Dockyard artificers?

*Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: £13,000.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: It appears to me from the figures that it will involve a much larger increase, for I understand 10 millions are to be given

for contract work and 11 millions for 38 ships to be built in the Dockyards. It appears to me this will involve a large increase in the number of artificers, and if this is to go on for four years and then cease, it will involve a great displacement of labour that will not be advantageous to the Dockyards or the Admiralty.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am asked if the 10 millions is to be an addition to the certain sum annually voted under sub-head of Votes 8, relating to contract work. The Shipbuilding Vote is under three heads—personal, material and stores, and contract. Contract work means hulls, or engines, that are put out for contract or manufacture. The Dockyards do not make their own engines—they are put out to contract. Under this programme no fresh hulls are to be put out to contract, except those within the sum of 10 millions. But vessels which are built in the Dockyards will require engines, and these will be put out to contract under this sub-head of the Navy Estimates, a larger amount of construction going on in the Dockyards. All the rest of the work to be put out to contract will be included in the 10 millions. Of course, as to how much we shall gain under the ordinary course of Estimates depends upon the height of the Estimates; but, assuming we keep the Estimates where they are now, the amount of contract work will be £620,000. The increase will be twofold—that upon the engines for the Dockyard-built vessels and that included in the 10 millions.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): There is also a deduction to be made for wastage.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: That is a matter of opinion. Of course, there will be a certain amount of wastage, but, as the right hon. Gentleman is probably aware, it is much less in our ironclads owing to the nature of the metal than in those of other countries.

MR. CHILDERS: I think the noble Lord has estimated that 30 or 40 vessels may be expected to become obsolete in four years.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Small vessels; not big ships, but gun boats, sloops, &c. As to a vessel being obsolete, of course, it is matter of opinion.

MR. R. W. DUFF: I understand that the regular Navy Estimates will be taken on Thursday. When will they be presented to the House?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: To-morrow morning.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I do not think this conversation should be allowed to close without a protest from those of us who object to any increased expenditure whatever. Whatever may be the merits of the arithmetical calculation we have listened to, it is clear there is to be a considerable increase in the charges for the Navy, and against this some of us will hereafter take the opportunity of protesting, because we think that amply sufficient money has been spent on the Navy, if it had been expended honestly, fairly, and practically, to give us a Navy equal to those of any two nations in the world. We find by experience that the more money is given the more it is wasted. Over and over again there have been special grants of 10 or 12 millions, and we have never had anything to show for them but what are called Fleets on paper. I never hear the hon. and gallant Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) speaking without being prompted by considerations of personal sympathy; and I would agree with all he says, if it were only possible. There was one thing he said this evening that I can quite agree with—that the Government have not given sufficient reason for the expenditure they demand. But I will not enlarge on that now. I only rose to give a distinct intimation that we shall protest against any increased expenditure whatever—and that, not because we wish to see the country in danger, not because we are less patriotic than hon. Members opposite, but because we have worked out—in our own mind, at any rate—a policy of our own, which would ensure the safety of the country, and ensure, at the same time, that all this money wasted in armaments, which I hope to God will prove utterly useless, would go into the mouths, the pockets, the homes of the people.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): As I understand the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he contemplates an addition of taxation of £1,400,000 a year for seven years, and of £600,000 for four years; and these two sums

together come to something under £12,500,000. Now, as I understand, this is the whole of the additional burden the Government contemplate over their scheme. I think that it is somewhat unfortunate that the noble Lord should speak about £21,500,000, as if it were in addition to the ordinary expenditure. Had this been made clear, there would not have been the difficulty that arose between the noble Lord the Member for Paddington and the First Lord of the Admiralty. Am I right in supposing that the addition to the ordinary expenditure will be £12,400,000?

MR. GOSCHEN assented.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): This is not the time to go fully into the subject, and all I will do is to cordially say "ditto" to my hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). I listened very attentively to the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty—a very able statement it was—expounding his intentions, though some of us did not seem quite to understand it, and there was one point the noble Lord altogether omitted. He did not give any reason why the country should be in such a position that it now requires all this increase of expenditure upon the Navy, nor did he give us any statement leading to the belief that any threatened danger called for this vast expenditure. I think the increase in itself is a much greater danger than anything that is likely to come to us from abroad. I can assure the noble Lord that when the right opportunity comes—when the next stage of the Bill comes forward, or when the legitimate and proper time comes, he shall receive the most determined opposition to his proposal from below the Gangway.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): Can the noble Lord give us an approximate estimate of how many ironclads will go out of commission during the interval? I think he said 40 ships; that will leave only 30 as additions.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: My answer was given off-hand. I was speaking from memory only. Of course whether an ironclad is obsolete or not is very much a matter of opinion. Certainly a number will be considered obsolete, but if there is any desire for it, I will see if I can provide the information.

SIR EDWARD REED: The noble Lord enumerated a number of ships which would require new boilers and new expansion engines; will the noble Lord say whether the ships, the names of which he read out as about to receive new boilers this year or next, are all or any of them going to receive new engines this year?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The *Minotaur*, the *Achilles*, and the *Superb* are about to receive new boilers, the *Thunderer*, *Devastation*, and *Rupert* new boilers and engines.

*MR. CREMER: May I ask when it is intended that the Question will be submitted for our decision, because I may say that it is intended by some of us below the Gangway—unless the initiative is taken above the Gangway, to meet the proposal with distinct opposition in the form of an Amendment.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I said earlier in the evening that we could not ask the House to take it into consideration before this day fortnight. Ample notice shall be given.

*LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): Are there any arrangements for putting new boilers in the coast defence vessels of the *Hydra* class?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes.

*MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): In reference to the question as to vessels becoming obsolete, I have Returns here for the four years 1884 to 1887, and there I find the number of vessels struck off, small and great, are 80, a larger number than the additions under the noble Lord's scheme.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Of course ships are struck off after they have been inefficient for a long time, and meanwhile many others have been added.

*MR. CHILDERS: Yes; but many more are in the same condition.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday, March 21.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1888-89.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £909, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Officers of the House of Lords."

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): It will be remembered that last Session the introduction of these Supplementary Estimates gave rise to considerable debate, and it was then stated on behalf of the Government that in future this course would be avoided as far as possible. But the case is worse now, for neither the Navy nor the Civil Service Estimates have yet been issued, and we are in the position of being asked to vote money without having the Estimates before us that we might examine the items and form our opinion. Last Session, in reply to a complaint of the practice of bringing forward Supplementary Estimates, and so depriving the Committee of a fair opportunity of considering the expenditure, a promise was made that, if possible, it should be avoided. But here we have the Supplementary Estimates sprung upon us again. I do not want to move any reduction or raise any particular objection to this Vote, but I wish to get some expression of opinion—some promise that this continual introduction of Supplementary Estimates—this taking of money in little bits—shall be avoided in future, and that the money shall be asked for in the ordinary Estimates, when the items can be properly examined.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson, Leeds, N.): I do not quite follow the hon. Member. These Supplementary Estimates now introduced have no connection with the Estimates about to be introduced for the coming year. These Supplementary Estimates are to make good deficiencies that would otherwise arise in the amounts which have already been voted for the current year. I entirely sympathize with the hon. Member in his desire to avoid Supplementary Estimates, and I can assure him there is nobody to whom they cause greater inconvenience than the Secretary to the Treasury for the time being. But circumstances arise that make them necessary. I may point out that the Estimates for the present financial year were framed fifteen months ago, and it is impossible to foresee all that may happen in respect to a particular Vote during fifteen months. This particular Vote arises in consequence of several Committees appointed to inquire into important subjects, such as the "Sweating Committee," the Committee on "Private Bill Legislation," the Committees on the "Pharmacy Acts," and "High Sheriffs," having prolonged their sittings into the Autumn Session far beyond the usual period; and so there arises extra expenditure for witnesses, for reporters, shorthand writers, and so on. These extra expenses could not be foreseen when the original Estimates were framed. In framing the Estimates a margin is always allowed, and everything which can be foreseen is provided for; and these comparatively few Supplementary Estimates are due to circumstances over which we have no control. I had hoped that the Committee would have congratulated the Government on these Supplementary Estimates being so small in number and amount, and I trust they will not be considered as requiring a long discussion.

Mr. MOLLOY: Of course, I quite understand these Supplementary Estimates are to meet deficiencies in the current year's accounts, but they have also a great deal to do with the Estimates for the coming year, just as the balance sheet of one year has relation to that of another year. Are we to have this year's Supplementary Estimates presented from time to time, or shall we take them in the ordinary course and consider them as a whole? These constant little petty discussions might be avoided, and in that sense they are an obstruction to ordinary business.

Mr. JACKSON: The hon. Member has in his mind, I think, what is known as the Vote on Account. The Estimates themselves will be in the hands of the House in a few days. It is the intention of the Government, and has been announced by the Leader of the House, that every facility will be afforded to hon. Gentlemen for the discussion of the Estimates.

Mr. MOLLOY: At what time?

Mr. JACKSON: Immediately. The Vote on Account of the Civil Service will be taken on Monday week.

The CHAIRMAN: This discussion is quite irregular. The Vote is £909 for the House of Lords.

MR. SEXTON (West Belfast): Mr. Courtney, the hon. Gentleman expects a little too much when he looks for congratulations with reference to these Estimates from this side of the House—

An hon. MEMBER called attention to the fact that there was not a quorum present.

The House was counted, and a quorum was found to be present.

MR. SEXTON: The explanation of the Secretary to the Treasury with reference to this Vote is not sufficient and not satisfactory. The hon. Gentleman has himself pointed out that the item is for Select Committees of the House of Lords, and that the increase is under the special head of shorthand writers. The Solicitor to the Treasury should have been able to forecast the expenditure. The hon. Gentleman has remarked that it was for the Sweating Committee. Now the Sweating Committee was appointed in February of last year.

MR. JACKSON: It succeeded the presentation of the Estimates.

MR. SEXTON: Certainly the expenditure must have been foreseen. I am the more moved to call attention to this matter seeing that the Irish Board of Guardians gets into difficulties by not being able accurately at the beginning of the year to forecast what its expenditure will be by the end of the year. With the experience of the officials of the Treasury, I wish to know how this Estimate has been increased by 50 per cent.?

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The Chancellor of the Exchequer said in the beginning of the evening that he was going to increase our taxation by a very large amount on account of our naval defences. I am opposed to the whole scheme, though I have no doubt the House will accept it. Under the circumstances, I think these are expensive and pernicious institutions which ought to be cut off. I have come to the conclusion that we might make a considerable economy, and with advantage to the country, if we never voted another shilling for the House of Lords.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to enter into the question of the House of Lords. He must confine himself to the items of the Vote.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, I object to those items on general principles because they are applied to an institution I disapprove of. I shall feel it my duty, whenever they are proposed, to divide the House. Here we have £43,731, and we are asked to spend another £900 on shorthand writers and law reporters. I think they are not needed, and I therefore oppose the expenditure as needless and pernicious.

MR. CREMER: The Secretary to the Treasury said that it was an exceedingly small sum we are asked to vote. Small as it is, I propose to reduce it by £500, and unless an assurance is given to the House that the system against which I protest will be discontinued, I shall redeem my promise of December last, and divide the House on every Vote where the principle to which I am about to refer is involved. The Sweating Committee, to which the Secretary to the Treasury, is no doubt a very important body, but it is a very remarkable thing that the Government appointed a Committee to inquire into the evils of sweating, which——

THE CHAIRMAN: The only Question the hon. Member can discuss is the propriety of the additional charges to complete the work of the Committee.

*MR. CREMER: The reason I rose was with reference to the workmen engaged in the House of Lords. It will be within the recollection of the Chairman and of the Committee that I called attention to the course which is pursued by the Government in not paying the *employés*——

THE CHAIRMAN: That is quite out of Order.

*MR. CREMER: I will then move, without any further comment, that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £500, reserving to myself the right, at the proper moment, to discuss the details.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £409, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Cremer.*)

MR. CONYBEARE (Camborne): I am exceedingly reluctant to vote against this Estimate, but I am afraid I must unless I get some information from the Government as to what this increase of salaries refers to. The details given were as to £138 in respect of Select Committees, and not as to

£686, which is the principal part, apparently, of the whole Vote. I think we ought to know what this unusual number of Select Committees have been doing, and what are to be the beneficial results from their cogitations. If the Government can satisfy me on these two points, I shall certainly not be disposed to vote against the Estimate.

MR. JACKSON: I do not know whether it is possible to satisfy the hon. Member for Camborne—[MR. CONYBEARE: I doubt it.] Quite so. The Vote states clearly and specifically what it is for. I have stated that there was an unusual number of Committees sitting for an unusual length of time, and the item is for the payment of reporters who took the shorthand notes. A very large proportion of the expenditure is due to the Sweating Committee, to which I should have thought there would have been no objection.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I have no confidence in that Committee; I go against the whole thing; and I shall object to every single Vote which appears in the Estimates for the House of Lords.

MR. SEXTON: The question I put to the hon. Gentleman was, why the expenditure in respect of a Committee which had been so long contemplated could not have been included in the ordinary Estimate for the year. With regard to the other Committees, I can see no reason why they should not be stated on the face of the Vote, and why the Minister should hesitate to name them to the Committee.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: Are we to understand that this charge is only for the taking of evidence and calling witnesses in the course of the proceedings of a Committee of the House of Lords?

MR. JACKSON: Yes; the system pursued in the other House is precisely the same as is pursued in this. Every Committee that sits upstairs has its shorthand writer, in exactly the same way as in another place. I thought I had already sufficiently explained the circumstances connected with this Vote. The Estimates are prepared in December or early in January, at the very latest, and at that time it was impossible to know how long the Lords' Committee would sit, or how much would be expended on witnesses and shorthand writers; so that it is only now, when we are coming to the end of the financial year, that we can put forward anything like an accurate Estimate, or anything likely to come in course of payment. Had there been any saving on any of the other subjects that were dealt with by Committees, it might have been applied to meet the excess here; but it was impossible at the end of the Autumn Session to determine the amount that would come in course of payment up to the 31st March in this instance.

MR. SEXTON: What were the other Committees?

MR. JACKSON: There were four—namely, the Sweating Committee, the High Sheriffs' Committee, the Committee on Private Legislation, and the Pharmacy Committee.

COLONEL NOLAN: I think it would be more business-like to over-estimate rather than under-estimate, as there is nothing that wastes the time of the Committee more than the practice of bringing in these Supplementary Estimates. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury speaks of four Committees, three of which strike me as most ridiculous — I allude to the Pharmacy Committee, the High Sheriffs' Committee, and the Private Legislation Committee. The High Sheriffs, we all know, are a very ridiculous institution, and I should like to know what, in the cases I have mentioned, we are to get for our money? What legislation do the Government intend to propose in regard to the Sweating System? Are they prepared to propose any legislation at all? If not——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. and gallant Member is wandering from the strict subject of the Vote, and I think he must be aware that the Committee on the Sweating System is still sitting.

COLONEL NOLAN: I have not seen any evidence in the papers for the last two or three days, although I have read that previously given; but I think it would be well, as the Committee has been sitting so long, to send it some strong expression of opinion from this House. As to the proposal to reduce the Vote by £500, I should prefer the suggestion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) to reduce it by £900. I think it would expedite the work of the Committee if the whole of the Opposition were to go

into the Lobby against the Vote, so as to mark its sense of the unbusiness-like conduct of the Government in this matter.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I have not a very extensive experience of Select Committees; but I think, from what I have seen, that, in a general way, there is an enormous amount of unnecessary evidence taken, a good deal of this evidence being the personal opinions of a set of partizans. If the evidence were confined to the elucidation of the facts it is desirable to get at, there might be some advantage in the expenditure incurred; but, as it is, there is usually no real value in the action of a Select Committee. In the latest Tory Governments it has been their policy to have a large number of Select Committees, probably because they afford the opportunity for a good deal of amusement to hon. Gentlemen who do not make much show in the House, but who can be elaborate enough on these Committees, and thus have it said of them—"Oh, he is a very good man on Committees." I think that under these circumstances it is the duty of this House to curtail this system of Select Committees, and the most effective way of doing this is to refuse to pay for these records of the senseless opinions of a lot of people whose views are not worth anything.

MR. G. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I am sorry the Government have had to ask for a Supplementary Vote; but, at the same time, under all the circumstances, I feel bound to support the Government. However much we may sneer at these Committees in general, it will, at any rate, be admitted that this Sweating Committee is bringing out a great deal of very valuable evidence, which amounts to something far more important than the opinions of experts—though, to my mind, the opinions of experts have their value. We do not as yet know what will be the outcome of this inquiry. The Committee have before them exceedingly valuable evidence on a very important question, which has formed a subject of debate in this House for a period of more than 30 years. I am sorry the question raised by my hon. Friends has been brought forward on this Vote, because, although I am strongly in favour of retrenchment in every possible shape, I, nevertheless, feel it my duty on this matter to vote with the Government.

MR. BIGGAR: The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken thinks that the opinions of experts are valuable; but in my view the opinions of experts are of no value at all; and, indeed, it is a recognized fact that there is no kind of evidence which is of so little value as that which is given by experts. I do not think the remarks of the hon. Member have added to the reasons for passing this Vote.

*MR. CREMER: I would merely point out that if the proposal I have made to reduce the Vote by £500 were carried, there would still be £409 left, which would be ample to meet the cost incurred by the Sweating Committee.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 45; Noes, 90. Majority, 45. (Division list, No. 8.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

(2) Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £3,290, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Land Commissioners for England."

MR. SEXTON: This is a vote which has reference to a disgracefully bad Estimate. (A laugh.) I am glad to hear the Attorney General laugh. The right hon. Gentleman has not had much opportunity for laughing of late. If hon. Members will examine the Estimate they will find that there ought to be a surplus; but, whereas certain receipts for the year ought to have amounted to £15,000, as a matter of fact they only reached £8,000. I ask the Financial Secretary to explain how so gross an error has been committed by the Department. I have also to complain that in connection with a Vote of this kind the information supplied by the Treasury is far too meagre, seeing that they have long had the necessary information to guide them in framing the Estimate. I think we have a right to be told what the nature of the receipts is, and what is the amount of each separate item.

MR. JACKSON: I shall be glad to give the hon. Member the explanation for which he asks. I quite admit that if the proposition of the hon. Member could be laid down with accuracy, this Estimate would deserve the epithet he

has applied to it. But the hon. Member is not correct in saying that the Treasury have had for many months the materials to guide them in framing the Estimate. In this particular case the Supplementary Estimate has been rendered necessary in consequence, as the hon. Member has pointed out, of a deficiency in the estimated receipts. The reason is, that the Land Commissioners had imposed upon them by an Act of Parliament passed two years ago certain duties in connection with ascertaining the value of extraordinary tithes. The costs of this work were to be paid by the tithe owners, who are the persons for whom the work is done. The work had been done, or nearly done, when certain draft certificates were issued by the Land Commissioners, to which an objection was taken by the tithe owners concerned, who were of opinion that the Commissioners were not construing the Act in accordance with the law. A request was made that time should be given—first to enable them to take counsel's opinion, and secondly to enable them to decide whether they should take further action in the matter. That occupied some time, and of course the tithes could not be collected. After taking time to consider the matter, the tithe owners came to the conclusion that they would not take the case to a Court of Law. Owing to the delay, the collection of the charges which fall upon the tithe owners has been postponed. I hope that the collection will be made complete next year, but the hon. Member will see that the delay is one which the Treasury could not possibly have foreseen when the Estimate was framed. I must say that I incline to the opinion that some pressure should be put upon the Department to make the collection promptly.

MR. SEXTON: Has the question been settled up to date?

MR. JACKSON: Yes.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I do not think that the Secretary to the Treasury has given a very satisfactory explanation of this Vote; but I hope the Exchequer will profit in the coming year by what it has lost last year. I regret to say that the Estimate has been placed before the Committee in such a way that it is impossible to understand it. I think it would have been better if the Secretary to the Treasury had commenced by explaining what the Vote is, instead of leaving the Committee to find it out for themselves.

MR. MOLLOY (King's County, Birr): This matter was discussed four months ago, and the Secretary to the Treasury gave then the explanation which he has given now. He told the House that there had been dispute with the tithe owners, who in the end declined to go into a Court of Law, and agreed to pay the demands made upon them. Having agreed to pay, I do not know why there should have been any further delay in the collection of the money. I think it is a pity that the hon. Gentleman has not some little further explanation to give.

MR. LABOUCHERE: This seems to me to be a somewhat serious matter. It is notorious that the tithe owners throughout the country are gentlemen who exact the last penny of what is due to them, and now we have these gentlemen putting off payment when it is due from themselves. They said in the first instance that they must appeal to a Court of Law. That is an old trick. They had not the most remote intention of going to a Court of Law. They said they must take counsel's opinion, but counsel would at once advise them that they had no case. The next step upon the part of the Treasury should have been to insist upon immediate payment. The hon. Gentleman says he hopes the money will be collected by next year; but why should it not be paid at once? Why should not these gentlemen be dealt with as they deal with those who owe them tithes? What would happen to those who have to pay tithes if they said in the first instance that they would go to a Court of Law, next, that they had changed their mind, and then that they hoped to pay next year? No doubt it was right to give time to enable the tithe owners to take the case to a Court of Law, but when they refused to do so the Secretary to the Treasury, instead of coming on the public Exchequer, should have made the tithe owners pay up at once. I altogether object to make any kind of concession to the tithe owners.

MR. JACKSON: May I point out to the hon. Member that these circumstances arose under a special Act dealing with what is called Extraordinary Tithe, and had nothing to do with the general tithe arrangements?

In reply to MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox)—

MR. JACKSON said the charge was for work done by the Land Commissioners in connection with the Extraordinary Tithe.

MR. CALDWELL: Is there any deficiency under the head of Appropriations in Aid? You estimate your receipts at £15,000, whereas your actual receipts have only been £8,000. I want to know if a mistake was made in the Estimate?

MR. JACKSON: No; the sum will be ultimately realized.

MR. CALDWELL: When?

MR. JACKSON: I regret that I am unable to say, but under the Act the whole of the expense in connection with this particular work is recoverable from the persons for whom the work has been done. Therefore, whatever the expenditure may have been, it must be recovered.

MR. BIGGAR: I do not know whether I rightly understand the hon. Gentleman's explanation as to the reason why the money was not paid in the financial year, and why the Government have not taken proceedings to recover it. It must be remembered that these people are owners of property, and not paupers. As far as I understand the matter, certain work has been done by the Commissioners, for which the tithe owners have received full value, and are they the sort of men who should be allowed to make appeals for consideration *in formâ pauperis?* They are men who can pay, and they ought to be made to pay. Unless the Government can give some better explanation of the reason why they have not collected this money, I think the Committee ought to reject the Vote.

MR. CONYBEARE: If the tithe owners find that this House is prepared to vote £3,000 in order to relieve them from embarrassment, I am afraid we shall have to whistle for any further payment from them. We know that when an Irish tenant is unable to pay his rent, the whole force of the law is put in motion to compel him. What I would suggest is, that there should be a little practical coercion in this country, in order to compel the landlords to pay their liabilities to the uttermost farthing. I shall, therefore, oppose the Vote, unless the Secretary to the Treasury gives an assurance that certain stringent clauses of the Irish Coercion Act shall be applied to English landlords. Let me call the attention of the Committee to the fact that what we are discussing now relates to circumstances which occurred in 1887, and not last year. The Commissioners report that, in accordance with the provisions of the Tithe Commutation Act, meetings were held in 266 parishes for the purpose of hearing the parties interested on both sides; that valuers were selected and appointed assistant Commissioners who, from their experience and knowledge, were likely to inspire confidence and to supply accurate information; that these assistant Commissioners had conducted numerous inquiries with marked ability and success; and that they had personally inspected the land, and deposited maps giving full particulars of the estates in respect of which extraordinary tithe was charged. In the end, the Commissioners issued draft certificates in relation to a number of representative parishes, in order to afford an opportunity to the tithe owners of carrying the case to the superior Courts. The Report of the Commissioners corroborates the statement of the Secretary to the Treasury to the letter; but it is dated January 31st, 1888. Yet we are told, more than a year afterwards, that perhaps some time next year the Treasury may be able to get in the money owing by the landlords. I think it is quite time that proceedings were taken against them to compel them to pay at once. I would suggest to the Government that they should, at any rate, require interest to be paid on money which has taken all this time to collect. The Commissioners say that they have been indebted to the Director General of the Ordnance Survey for the assistance he has lent; and they add that the work has been quickly and efficiently done, at a very moderate charge to the landowners. In their tenderness to the landlords, the Government have taken every measure to enable them to get the work done in the cheapest possible way. I think that, under all the circumstances, we have a right to press for some more satisfactory answer than we have yet received from the Government as to when they intend to make these people pay. I wish to make clear this

point—that the business transacted by this Office ought to cover all the expenses.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The hon. Member is entirely out of order in discussing the Vote on general grounds.

Mr. SEXTON: I think the Committee should bear in mind that the Question whether or not the House should vote this money depends on whether time enough has been allowed to these landowners to pay the very moderate charges. The House has already voted more than enough for the expenses of the Department for the year, providing that the debts owing to it had been paid, as they should have been. We must be satisfied that reasonable diligence has been used in getting in the debts. Will the Secretary to the Treasury lay on the Table an account showing how long this money has been due, and when it ought to have been paid?

Mr. JACKSON: I will make inquiries into the matter. I do not think it is possible to give the hon. Member what he asks. I am not sure it is quite correct to say that the money has been long due. The arrangements made for collecting the money are, I believe, as satisfactory as possible. It is collected by the Inland Revenue collectors, and is done in the cheapest possible way.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he has made such arrangements, as he promised in the debates last year, as will obviate the necessity for asking for another such Vote?

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The right hon. Gentleman is not entitled to discuss the Vote generally.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I shall feel it my duty to divide against that Vote, unless I have an assurance that this is the last time we shall be asked to pass such a Vote.

Mr. JACKSON: I am afraid that the right hon. Gentleman will have to divide the Committee then. I am not in a position to give such an assurance, and I am not prepared to say that it is either possible, desirable, or practicable to make, at a moment's notice, such an alteration in the charges as will defray the whole cost of the establishment.

Mr. BIGGAR: Have proceedings been taken against these people to recover the money?

The Committee divided:—Ayes 104; Noes 70; Majority 34. (Division List No. 9.)

(3.) Motion made and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £8,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for Stationery, Printing, and Paper, Binding, and Printed Books for the two Houses of Parliament, and for a Grant in Aid of the publication of Parliamentary Debates."

Colonel NOLAN: This seems to be a very extravagant vote, and although I am not frightened at the amount, I must say I am astonished at the explanation which is given of it. We are told that the increase is due to the extra length of last Session. Well, all I can say is that if the Government had only arranged their business properly last Session, we should not have had to sit for so long a period, and we should not have been called upon to pay this heavy bill. Now I really think that the Government are not anxious to cut down the expenses of printing. A case occurred to-day in which I put a question and with a verbal answer to which I should have been perfectly content, but the Minister to whom it was addressed suggested that I should move for a Return, and consequently this necessitates the expenditure of £5 or £10, which might have been avoided. But to return to the long Session. Ministers muddled the time of the House, and I hope it will be a lesson to them. In the future I trust that they will give us short Sessions, and arrange their business properly. Meanwhile, in order to mark the sense of the House of their conduct, I move to reduce the Vote by £4,000. I think if we allow them one half of the sum they apply for, they ought to be satisfied.

Motion made, and Question, put "That a sum not exceeding £4,000 be granted for the said service."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Dr. CLARK (Caithness-shire): Will the hon. Gentleman tell us why we are called upon to pay £1,000 for two extra volumes of *Hansard?*

Mr. W. L. JACKSON: The explanation is that until the present Session the arrangement with Mr. Hansard was that he should be paid £500 per volume,

and, owing to the necessity of an Autumn Session, there were two extra volumes, for which we have to pay £1,000.

MR. MOLLOY: I understand that there is now a new *Hansard*, and there has been some difference made in the order of indexing. I think it would be of advantage to hon. Members if the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would give Messrs. MacRae, Curtice & Co. a hint that it would be most convenient if they adhered to the old style of indexing. I am sure hon. Members would much prefer it.

MR. SEXTON: I share the astonishment of my hon. and gallant Friend, although I know he is not easily astonished; but my astonishment arises from a different cause. Instead of a heavy deficiency, I should have expected a surplus on this Vote, because last year the Government were very chary in granting Returns, especially affecting Ireland. I remember many cases in which we asked for Returns, such as lists of prisoners, depositions in magisterial proceedings and correspondence, which were refused. And they were refused on one of two grounds: either that they would take too much trouble to prepare, or that they were too long to print. The consequence was that the Irish Members were driven to the newspapers and to private correspondence for material for debate, instead of being supplied, as they ought to be, with printed Parliamentary Papers. And now I intend to ask the Government for an undertaking to treat us more liberally in this matter in the future if we pass this Vote on this magnificent scale. With regard to the extra volumes of *Hansard*, these are partly due to the prolongation of the Session, and partly to the undue prolixity of Ministers, which developed in a singular way last year. Undue prolixity is an incurable vice; but, in regard to the question as to how far the extra volumes of *Hansard* were necessary, I must point out that the prolongation of the Session was entirely due to the mismanagement and incompetence of Ministers, who persisted in taking votes on account, and deprived the House of Commons of its opportunities of criticizing the Estimates. Therefore, instead of asking the House of Commons to pay the £1,000, I think that the Ministers ought to pay the money themselves.

MR. F. W. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I wish to ask how many houses of business are invited to tender for stationery. We all remember the iniquity——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled to discuss the Vote generally.

MR. CONYBEARE: I oppose this Vote on slightly different grounds to those advanced by my hon. Friend the Lord Mayor of Dublin. He objects to the Vote because Ministers have been too chary in giving us Parliamentary Papers. I oppose it because, in some respects, they have been too lavish. They have given us Returns in a form which we did not require. Take, for instance, the Blue Book containing what purported to be an official Report of the Mandeville trial—a most shameful and garbled Report——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot discuss the character of a report.

MR. CONYBEARE: I would not do that. I think I have characterised it in sufficiently strong terms——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, Order! The hon. Member must not persist in thus speaking when called to order.

MR. CONYBEARE: I have not the slightest desire to be disorderly, neither will I be a toady. I was objecting to this Vote on certain grounds, but as I do not wish to disobey your ruling, I will resume my seat.

MR. F. W. ISAACSON: This Vote is described as for Stationery for the Houses of Parliament. I presume Stationery is required for this House, and therefore is it not in order to ask if proper estimates are obtained?

THE CHAIRMAN: This is a Supplementary Vote. The question which the hon. Member wishes to ask would be quite pertinent on the original Vote, but it is not on the Supplementary Vote.

MR. J. G. BIGGAR: I wish to know if the Stationery Committee are going to meet this year or not.

COLONEL NOLAN: As it appears the Printing Vote was under-estimated, I should like to know if the only Committee which has control of this matter ever met last year.

MR. JACKSON: There has been an alteration in the constitution of the

Printing Committee. I believe the Committee did not meet last year, but my hon. Friend the Chairman gave a large amount of time to these matters, and I hope that this year there will be some real control exercised.

COLONEL NOLAN: As the Committee do not appear to have met, I think this Committee should mark its displeasure at the excess of the Vote — which arises from the lack of control — by making a substantial reduction.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): Can the Secretary to the Treasury give us any details of the Vote? The explanation in the Estimate is simply that the Vote is unprecedentedly large. Why have we not a Return shewing the number of Papers printed, and a comparison with previous years?

MR. LABOUCHERE: I suppose the excess in the Vote is due to the fact that the Session was exceptionally long. But whose fault was it that Ministers muddled away the time of the House and necessitated this expenditure? I shall certainly divide against the Vote. A promise was made to us last Session that we should not have so many papers sent us, that instead we should have a list every morning of the papers printed, so that we might be able to ask for what we required. I thought it was perfectly understood——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. That is a matter affecting the General Vote and not the Supplementary one.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 72; Noes 129: Majority 57.—(Divivision List, No. 10.)

Original Question put and agreed to.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I hope I shall be in order in expressing the hope which was expressed last year that *Hansard* will in future contain a table showing the number of times the Closure is applied in each Session.

THE CHAIRMAN: That does not come within the scope of the Supplementary Estimates.

Vote agreed to.

(4.) £292, Supplementary, for the Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland.

MR. SEXTON: This is a small vote but a remarkable one. The Treasury estimated the expenditure at £25, but they now come for an additional sum of £292. I am anxious to know whether the Board are allowed to institute actions on their own discretion, and whether the Returns so untested are paid out of the purse of the State.

MR. JACKSON: I believe the Board have full and complete power to take action when they think it is necessary for the protection of the funds.

MR. SEXTON: At the cost of the State?

MR. JACKSON: Yes, at the cost of the State. Bnt I understand that there has been paid into the Exchequer rather more than has been paid out.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I should like to know how much was left by the Francis Murray's Charity, because I see that £235 of the State's money was spent in seeing that the trustee paid over the money.

MR. JACKSON: I don't know the amount of the Charity.

MR. CONYBEARE: It surely would prevent much discussion on matters of this kind if all the facts were clearly set forth in the Estimate—if, for instance, it was shown that there is really no charge upon the public purse.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan): I cannot altogether admit that the explanation of the hon. Gentleman is perfectly satisfactory. As I understand, this Board in Dublin have power to spend money in law costs at their own discretion, whether or not they are likely to recover the debt or the costs either. I do not think that these people in Dublin should have the power to involve the Treasury in the expenses of litigation without first of all obtaining the consent of the Treasury. The Board are on more or less friendly terms with their Solicitor, and, of course, it is an extremely pleasant thing for him to run up a bill of costs when he knows that the British taxpayer is to bear the burden.

Vote agreed to.

(5) £12,000 Supplementary for Criminal Prosecutions, Sheriffs' Expenses, &c.

MR. JACKSON: Perhaps I may explain that owing to the passing of the Local Government Act last year a larger number of Sheriffs' claims will come in course of payment during this financial year than was anticipated. This, however is likely to be the last occasion on

which this Vote will be taken in its present form.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I presume that upon this Vote I shall be in order in referring to the Edlingham burglary case. I am inclined to think that in this case there was a Treasury prosecution, and I am anxious to know whether the cost is included in this Vote.

MR. JACKSON: It is not.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding £123 be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Land Registry."

MR. JACKSON: I should like to explain that there is a slight error in the explanatory note—1887 having been printed for 1889. Under an Act passed last year and an Order made by the Lord Chancellor, certain changes have been made which came into operation on February 1, 1889, and it is to provide for the expense caused by these changes between February 1 and March 31 that this Vote is required. The increased cost will be covered by fees, so that no ultimate expense will be incurred.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): This is a very small amount, but it raises a very great principle. This is an office which I venture to say is one of the most useless in the whole range of the Administration of this country, and is one against which the House of Commons has protested year after year, and which the last Government endeavoured to abolish so far as they could. At all events, they brought to an end a sinecure at the head of the office of something like £2,500 a year, and the intention was to bring the office itself to an end as soon as possible. The Secretary to the Treasury has alluded to an Act which was passed last Session. When that Bill was put from the Chair the Member who had the Bill under his care assured me that no additional expense would be thrown on the public by the Bill. To make assurance doubly sure, I asked, before I assented to the Third Reading, the Secretary to the Treasury to state that no additional expense would be incurred. The hon. Gentleman then stated that he had made such arrangements that no additional expense would be put upon the country. Now this is an office which has absolutely nothing to do. I believe that a Return presented to Parliament last year showed that only eight titles had been submitted to this office which has cost us in the year £2,796. I object to vote one single shilling to this Land Registry Office. If changes should be made in the office let them be made by Act of Parliament. I know that we shall be told that the fees will cover this additional expenditure. But what I say is, let expenditure be incurred when the fees come in and do not let expenditure be incurred until the fees do come in. I shall certainly divide without a moment's hesitation against this Vote, and I hope the Government will not persist in committing the House to this foolish expenditure.

MR. MOLLOY: This office has been under discussion for several years, and I rise especially for the purpose of saying that last year when the vote was under consideration, a distinct promise was given that no furthur expenditure would be incurred in the office. Now, however, additional expense has been incurred in consequence of the introduction of new arrangements under an Order from the Lord Chancellor. That these arrangements have been made under an Order of the Lord Chancellor is, in my opinion, sufficient reason why hon. Members on both sides of the House should vote against this expenditure.

MR. CONYBEARE: I am exceedingly glad the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton has taken a stand upon this matter. On what ground does the Secretary to the Treasury anticipate that the costs will be more than covered by the increase of fees? What alterations have taken place to induce us to suppose that the fees will be increased? I should also like hon. Members to observe that under Sub-Head A. we are asked to vote £50 for two ordnance surveyors and civil assistants. Now it has transpired in the course of the discussion on the Vote of the Land Commissioners, that some of these very surveyors had been lent by the Government to the land owners at an exceedingly moderate charge. While that is the case, we are asked to pay additional sums to similar officers under this Vote. It appears to

me that if the Government had been more chary in lending Government *employés* to land owners, there would not have been any necessity to ask for the £50 shown under the Sub-Head A.

MR. JACKSON: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton says I gave some promise in regard to the Bill referred to. I confess I cannot recall it to my recollection, but I will not question the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for the Camborne Division has referred to the money set down for ordnance surveyors and civil assistants. These gentlemen, however, will not be paid unless they are employed, and they will not be employed unless there is work for them to do.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I hope that the Committee will not vote this extra money, because the Land Registry Office is a complete sham. In my own opinion, the office is simply kept up at large expense, and is really a blind to prevent reforms in the land system.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I will not go into the question of whether this office ought to be abolished; but I should like to point out that we already pay for this office the sum of £2,796 a year. The work is infinitesimal, and yet, when a little extra work is thrown upon the office, it seems that, according to the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, the country is to be saddled with additional expense in consequence.

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (SIR R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I may remind the House that some two years ago when an appointment carrying a salary of £2,500 a year became vacant it was not filled up by the Lord Chancellor, who then stated that some slight clerical assistance would probably be necessary to do the work of the office in relation to transfer of titles. That was mentioned at the time, and as I understand this extra clerk is required in consequence of the larger reduction previously made. I believe the hon. Gentleman opposite who took a considerable part in the passing of the Bill last year, is aware the office does more work now than in years gone by.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddington): I was not present at the commencement of this discussion, but certainly it is a source of surprise to me that there should be an increase in the estimate for the expenses of the Land Registry Office. It will be remembered that in the form in which I introduced the Bill of last Session, it was proposed to include bankruptcy in the encumbrances with which the Bill has to deal, but this was dropped out because we found that to include it would add materially to the expense. Certainly we were under a strong conviction that the expenses of the office should not be increased. Speaking as one who has had some little experience of it, I may express the opinion that the Land Registry Act of 1875 has been a complete failure. I remember one transaction in which I was concerned when the cost of transferring an estate of £3,000 from the vendor to purchaser was run up to £600. That ought not to be. I am glad to think that in a Bill introduced in "another place," and which was before this House last year, there is evidence that the difficulties of the situation are realised; and I believe that when that Bill comes again before us, the repetition of such a scandal—for it is nothing less—will be prevented in future. But, meanwhile, is it expedient to add to the expense of the maintenance of this office? So far as the little Act with which I was connected last year is concerned, upon which all parties were agreed, as an addition to security of title, all we did was to give to a useless staff something to do to justify their existence so as to enable them to while away the hours public officials sometimes spend in their office, and to prevent the tedium of official life pressing too heavily upon them. Assuredly, I would have been no party to adding to the charge on the taxpayer for the expenses of this office. I can, of course, only speak from outside knowledge; but I cannot believe it is necessary to add to the staff in order to transact the very simple duties imposed upon it by the Act of last year; and it is certainly a source of considerable disappointment to me to find that a Bill, which passed with the approval of all parties and on the understanding that no additional burden should be imposed, should now be made the—I will not say pretext—the reason for this increase. Of course, I understand that the Secretary to the Treasury cannot help himself.

MR. JACKSON: I thought I had explained that this is merely a transfer of a clerk from the Supreme Court, not an additional burden put upon the taxpayers for his salary. He was transferred because of his competency for the work—technical work only to be done by a man specially trained for it. He will be paid according to the extent of his services.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: The answer to that is that if the clerk has been transferred from the Supreme Court his salary has already been voted in the Estimates for the year, and, therefore, there is no necessity at all for this additional Estimate. We know by experience what these transfers mean, and how they work out. I trust the hon. Member for Stockport, who has had considerable experience in these scandals of the Supreme Court, will give us his assistance in this matter, and show what the staff of this Land Registry Office is. The Attorney General says this is owing to a reduction made when the late Government was in office. What we did was to strike out a sinecure office, which had been often so called, of £2,500 a year. What was left behind for this office, the character of which my hon. Friend adequately described? There is a Vice-Registrar with £1,500; a Chief Clerk with £400; a Second Clerk with £350; and a third with £250. With all this staff they, in addition, charge for copying, engrossing, and extra business £220. There is also a porter, a housekeeper, and an allowance for assistance. Under the circumstances, I am not disposed to vote even £6 additional to the office. The hon. Member for Haddington has confirmed my statement and repeated it. I should have opposed the Third Reading if —the Secretary of the Treasury says he does not recollect it, but it was some responsible Member of the Government—if the Government had not said that there should be no increase in the cost of working this office. It was on the faith of this pledge that the Bill passed. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will not carry the Vote to a Division now, but will allow it to be raised in a proper form on the Estimates.

MR. JACKSON: I should have thought the right hon. Gentleman, with his long experience, would have known that, although the sum might be voted in the Vote for the Supreme Court, it is not possible to pay the charge for the Land Registry Vote under that for the Supreme Court.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: He is now a Clerk of the Supreme Court.

MR. JACKSON: I beg pardon, he is not; he is transferred to the Land Registry. The right hon. Gentleman says the salary has been voted and the clerk is paid, but he is in error, it is absolutely impossible that he could be paid for one purpose out of money voted for another.

*SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, North-west): I am loathe to intervene in this discussion, but I remember how strongly, on a former occasion, protest was made against additional expenditure on this account. On many grounds, into which I will not now enter, I would appeal to my right hon. Friend not to proceed with the Vote for this additional sum. We have been told over and over again that this Vote was not to be increased, but decreased. Though the increase is small, I must object to it. Once get this extra clerk there, and you cannot get rid of him. It is an unwise thing to propose any addition, and I certainly cannot support such an increase.

*MR. CHILDERS: I hope the Government will yield to this advice. The effect of the Vote appears to be simply adding another clerk to the three or four who have nothing to do. I hope the Government will give way.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The fact is this clerk has been borne on the Supreme Court Staff and he has been transferred.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: Why?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: To discharge this duty and carry out the provisions of the Statute passed last year. He has been transferred, and it is not possible to pay this clerk under the Vote for the Supreme Court. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fowler) shakes his head—if he can be paid out of the Supreme Court Vote I would not ask the House for this Vote. But he cannot be so paid, and I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman would wish to deprive the clerk of the salary he would have received had he remained on the staff of the Supreme Court. However, I will inquire into the circumstances. No one desires more than I do to diminish the expenditure on Land Registry, or that it should disappear altogether; but the House will see that in our desire for economy we should not be justified in depriving a clerk who has been doing work for the public service—whether the work is good or bad—we are not justified in depriving him of his salary. But I will inquire into the circumstances, and if it is possible to make the payment under the Supreme Court Vote then that shall be done. Meantime, we withdraw the Vote.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

(6) £20,000, Supplementary, Police—Counties and Boroughs, Great Britain.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): This is for the purpose of discharging the contributions for pay and clothing of police up to September 29 last year. That date is six months past, and I should have thought that if the Treasury had been brisk in their business they might have closed this account. Why is it not closed? When is it likely to be? Will it be on the regular Estimates, or afford matter for another Supplementary Estimate?

THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): The hon. Member will observe this is for money under the Accounts of 1888. The 1888-9 Estimates brought this matter up to the end of 1887; and of course, at that time, the Local Government Bill was only in preparation, and it is not the rule in the Estimates to anticipate the effect of proposed legislation.

MR. SEXTON: I did not say or suppose so.

MR. STUART WORTLEY: It was not possible at that time to close the Accounts, or ask the authorities to present their Accounts in a new form.

MR. SEXTON: The hon. Gentleman misapprehends my point, which is this—that the Accounts are for 1888, and we are now advanced in 1889. Why has the Treasury not been able to close the account and settle this in the Estimates?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: The original Accounts go up to the end of 1887, and these are the amounts by which they fall short up to the date given. I may explain that under the old system some local authorities send in accounts for payments for which they are actually liable on September 29, while others claim in anticipation of payments becoming due. This £20,000 is necessary to close the old account.

MR. SEXTON: The hon. Gentleman says the practice varies; but surely this is a matter on which the Treasury should have given notice to the local authorities?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: Correspondence has taken place, but necessarily after the preparation of the Estimates. This Supplementary Estimate is the consequence.

Vote agreed to.

(7) £600, Supplementary, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain.

*MR. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): When we are asked to spend more money on Reformatory and Industrial Schools it seems a fair opportunity for putting the question whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to extend to Scotland the power of establishing day Industrial Schools, such as exist in England?

When the point was raised last Session, we were led to suppose that the power would be extended to the School Boards in Scotland; but we found that a Bill introduced in another place, having reference to Industrial Schools, excluded Scotland. My statement that it did so was controverted by the Home Secretary, and at the time I had not a copy of the Bill for reference, as I naturally thought he would have known the contents of the Bill, which issued from his own Department. However, an assurance was ultimately given that Scotland was to be put on the same footing with England. I hope that assurance still holds good.

*Mr. STUART WORTLEY: So far as I am able to answer for the intentions of my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary, it is intended to place Scotland in reference to day Industrial Schools on an equality with England. It is our policy to make the system uniform as far as possible, and it was by inadvertence that this was not effected as regards Day Industrial Schools in the Bill referred to.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I think this supports the contention of Scotch Members that this Department should be placed under the control of the Secretary for Scotland, and I hope at an early day that transfer will be carried into effect.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Constant complaint is made of the very high standard taught in these schools. You give children from the lowest ranks high class teaching, especially in arithmetic.

*The CHAIRMAN: The Vote refers exclusively to Industrial Schools.

Dr. CLARK: To that I was speaking.

Vote agreed to.

(8.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1889, for certain Expenses of the Law Agent in Scotland for Government Departments."

*Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow): I rise, Sir, to oppo se the grant of this money, and the Government know that they have no right to make this demand upon us for this sum. They tell us now what we could not get from them last Session; it was merely by chance that a Question elicited the information we now have, that these are not expenses altogether for Peterhead Harbour Works, but that the legal expenses of the Sheriff of Inverness have very much more to do with it. The Vote is asked for to pay the expenses incurred, by Sheriff Ivory in a Civil action for libel raised against him for publishing, in violation of his duty, the contents of a confidential report. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) was present at the time this subject was raised on a former occasion, and he, seeing that the item would give rise to considerable debate, suggested that the Vote should be put off, and that, in the meantime, the House should have the papers giving the information asked for. Well, we now have the papers, and nothing can be more conclusive than the evidence they give that the Government have no justification whatever in making this demand. If hon. Members have read the papers, they will find that Sheriff Ivory is not only guilty of a libel, but that his whole writings are a series of libels, and his official documents one long string of libels against many persons, including myself. He cannot even allow the late Lord Advocate to escape, because he thinks that the right hon. Gentleman's influence with the Treasury was used against him. Sheriff Ivory, as the House will remember, was in charge of military expeditions, which were sent to Skye a couple of years ago, and he carried out those operations in a

manner which appeared to myself, to other Scotch Members, and to a very large portion of the Scotch people, to be an illegal, brutal, and unjustifiable manner. This matter has been brought before the House repeatedly. We have shown how he broke the law in the matter of the secrecy of Postal Telegraph; how he went to a Post Office and bullied the postmaster and the telegraph clerk until he obtained the information he sought from a telegram. He denied that, but he has published a Report containing a number of private telegrams which he obtained illegally, and he made that publication in an utterly illegal and unjustifiable manner. Whoever has happened to cross the path of Sheriff Ivory has been crushed in the most vindictive manner. Such was the case with the Sheriff's Clerk Depute of Portree. He had the misfortune to come across Sheriff Ivory, and has been hounded out of his post. A telegraphist, from whom he obtained information illegally, was so persecuted that she was unable to remain at Portree, and applied to be transferred to Glasgow. That is a matter within my personal knowledge. He quarrelled even with the Chief Constable of the Police. Well, in the course of this expedition searches were made; but these searches were conducted with no regard to moderation. Whole villages were ransacked; troops surrounded houses, and every room was invaded, no distinction being made, though invalids and females were therein. Now, it seemed to us that this was a matter of Constitutional right; that the sanctity of these crofters homes should not be allowed to be violated without trying to obtain redress in a Court of Law. A subscription was raised, a considerable amount of money was subscribed, and an action was commenced. Three actions were raised, one against the Prosecutor Fiscal and two against Mr. Sheriff Ivory, one of these actions being taken by a cow-herd. It seems that a detachment of military was sent into a district to capture a certain individuals who had deforced a sheriff's officer on the previous day, and a man being espied on the top of a hill, in spite of there being no presumption of guilt against him, and though no warrant had been taken out for his capture, he was siezed and imprisoned by Sheriff Ivory. Subsequently, however, there being no evidence against the man, he was liberated, and an action was brought against Sheriff Ivory for the part he had taken in the matter. The Court, however, held that, under the circumstances, the action of the Sheriff was privileged, and a verdict was given in his favour. The second case—that of Stewart—sprung out of a Report which Sheriff Ivory wrote to the Lord Advocate, and this Report was, of course, in itself a confidential and a privileged document. Sheriff Ivory, however, appears to have been aggrieved by something said against him by a clergyman in Skye, and, instead of availing himself of the ordinary means that the law or the newspapers put in his power to vindicate himself against the assertions of this clergyman, he thought it would be more dignified to devote a large portion of his Report to the vindication of his action, and to publish that Report in the newspapers. If the Home Secretary had thought it desirable to make this Report public, Sheriff Ivory must have known that the right hon. Gentleman would have done so by laying it on the Table of the House. But Sheriff Ivory did not consult the Home Secretary, and, as a matter of fact, the then Home Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, was dead against the publication of it, and positively refused to put the document on the Table of the House. Sheriff Ivory alleged that in a conversation with the Lord Advocate of that time he had received permission to publish the Report; but that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Clackmannan (Mr. J. B. Balfour) denied. Sheriff Ivory, in his Report, spoke of Stewart as being the ringleader of the mob, an accusation which the result of Stewart's trial proved to have been entirely unfounded. Actions having been brought against him, the Sheriff applied to the Crown to undertake his defence, on the ground that the action which formed the subject of the cases was taken by him as servant of the Crown. The Lord Advocate replied that if the Sheriff had acted properly, he would be able to defend his character, in which case, if he found himself unable to recover his costs, it would be for the Crown to say whether they would not hold him free from the loss of his expenses. Here a

question arose as to whether the Treasury had taken any steps to see that Sheriff Ivory had asked that his expenses from the pursuer in one of the cases where his defence was sustained before the indemnity was paid him by the Government. The fact was that, although there was sufficient money in the hands of the pursuer to pay the expenses, they were never asked for payment. Sheriff Ivory did not consider it a dignified course to ask for his expenses, and in spite of this the Secretary to the Treasury was prepared to pay the money. In Stewart's case, the Lord Advocate refused to recommend the Treasury to pay the expenses, asserting that the action of the Sheriff had been most imprudent, and it was utterly unusual, and opposed to official precedent, to publish a Report such as that supplied by the Sheriff without official sanction in writing. In the course of the correspondence which ensued it was stated that Sheriff Ivory was acting in *bona fides*, and believed he had the sanction of the Lord Advocate for what he had done. Well, one circumstance threw great doubt upon Sheriff Ivory's feeling in the matter — namely, that when he published it he prefaced it with a lie—with a statement to the effect that it had been placed before a meeting of the Commissioners of Supply of Inverness-shire. I asked a Question about this, and was told that Sheriff Ivory had never laid the Report before the Commissioners of Supply of Inverness. This piece of duplicity on the Sheriff's part seems to me to be matched by the way that the matter was brought under our notice last Session, this Vote being put down as "Peterhead Harbour, Woods and Forests," and so on. I hold that to pass this Vote would be a gross insult to the people of Scotland. There is not a man in the whole of that country who has been so severely criticized as Sheriff Ivory, and there is not a man there who has given anything like the occasion for censure that he has given. After in vain approaching this House to seek redress, and being repulsed by Parliament—or the Parliament House element that has control in this House of Scotch affairs—we took the only means to have questions of important Constitutional rights settled. We—a large section of the Scotch people—were determined to put an end to these high-handed proceedings on Sheriff Ivory's part, so we took the only course in our power. We subscribed to a fund to enable the question to be tried in the Law Courts, and there, forsooth, because Sheriff Ivory is found to have been wrong, or because it does not suit Sheriff Ivory to send in his bill of costs, the Treasury magnanimously come forward and make him a present of the whole sum out of the public money. That, I say, is an insult to the people of Scotland, and I defy the Lord Advocate to get up and defend it without putting a deliberate slight upon his Predecessor. In Beaton's case the agents for the pursuer were prepared to pay Sheriff Ivory's expenses, but he did not apply for them. The Treasury paid them, and in recommending their payment, the late Lord Advocate, I contend, showed the Sheriff too much favour. In the second case the then Lord Advocate went dead against the whole affair, being unable to see any reason whatever to recommend a grant of money. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Clackmannan said nothing to justify Sheriff Ivory; and I should like to know why that right hon. Gentleman's letter, which was laid before the Lords of the Treasury, is not included in the papers which have been supplied to the House? I ask the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury to the fact of the omission of this letter. The calumnious and mendacious attacks of Sheriff Ivory upon myself and others have been put in the papers—why could not the Government have spared a page for the letter of the late Lord Advocate, especially in view of the fact that they found their whole defence on that letter? I suppose it did not suit their purpose.

MR. JACKSON: It was private.

*DR. CAMERON: Then why did the Government go out of their way to act on this private document in the teeth of the official advice of their own Legal Adviser? Now, I have laid before the House as briefly as I can the facts of this case. We shall require to have a full explanation. I shall probably have to recur to the matter again, as I am certain we shall have a good deal of shuffling, and that it will be necessary to put the facts very clearly

["Oh, oh!"] Well, I can only judge by what has already taken place. The matter is a small one from a monetary point of view, but it is a large one in point of principle; and I venture to say that if the Treasury officials had principle at heart, as the amount in question is so small, they would rather have made a present of this £200 to Sheriff Ivory in payment of his expenses, as private subscribers have been content to do on the other side, than allow the case to be discussed in the House. I shall move the reduction of the Vote by the whole sum—that is to say, I shall oppose the Vote.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has certainly imported a tone of acrimony into the discussion of this sum of £200, which has already been amply explained, because he has explained that while his speech purports to criticize the action of the Government in refunding this money to a public servant, yet he personally has this complaint to make against Sheriff Ivory—namely, that Sheriff Ivory has defamed him (Dr. Cameron).

*DR. CAMERON: I made no complaint. I merely mentioned it as a matter of fact. It does not concern me.

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: He mentioned that as a matter of fact incidentally, and then, anxious that persons in a responsible position should not defame others, proceeds to use against Sheriff Ivory language which, if used outside this House, would be distinctly held to be defamatory. The question is, how far are public officers to be defended by their superiors in this House, when Members of Parliament use language against them here which, if used elsewhere, would be clearly actionable? This matter is a very clear one. In the first place, the hon. Gentleman has not mentioned the libel alleged to have been uttered by Sheriff Ivory. What Sheriff Ivory said was that a certain person was the ringleader of a mob and the chief promoter of lawlessness in the district. But under what circumstances was this written? Why, Sheriff Ivory, with the approval of the Government, went down on an expedition to arrest those who were the ringleaders in what were unquestionably lawless proceedings. He went down and executed a most difficult, delicate, and invidious duty, and on his return it became necessary for him to write a Report of the result of his proceedings. That Report was presented to the Lord Advocate. The document he prepared contained a full report of what had taken place, and incidentally a person was named as one of the ringleaders of the mob. That was not an opinion of Sheriff Ivory's; but he founded his statement upon the distinct information of those accountable to him upon the subject; and therefore, in making his statement to the Lord Advocate, Sheriff Ivory was doing no more than his duty. But the matter did not end there. He came to town and saw the Lord Advocate, and the result of that interview was that Sheriff Ivory carried away the impression that the Lord Advocate recommended or told him to send his Report to the newspapers. The reason why that was a plausible step was very obvious. It was because defamatory statements had been made against this learned Sheriff, and because every attempt was being made by agitators to bring him into disrepute, and it was only just that in some form or other the public should have brought before them the lines of his defence. That was Sheriff Ivory's opinion, and the opinion of the Lord Advocate. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) allows that if Sheriff Ivory, instead of sending his Report to the papers, had placed it before the Government, and the Government had laid it upon the Table of the House, it could then have been published.

*DR. CAMERON. I beg pardon. I distinctly said that the Home Secretary refused to lay it upon the Table.

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: But he pointed out that it was in the power of the Government to publish it. Clearly

Sheriff Ivory could have obtained it publication. He could have sent his Report to the Police Committee of Inverness, and they would have been at liberty to publish it in one way or another. If that were all, there would have been no difficulty in getting the document published under the shelter of privilege, and then there could have been no action in respect of it. The sole technical point was this—that Sheriff Ivory sent the Report direct to the newspapers instead of to the authorities. Accordingly Sheriff Ivory's error lies not in the fact of publication, but merely in the mode of publication. The only point attempted to be made against Sheriff Ivory is the frankness and directness with which the publication was made. Sheriff Ivory was under the belief that the Lord Advocate had authorized the publication of the Report. I regret that my right hon. Friend the Member for Clackmannan is not here, because I have reason to know that he would have completely confirmed what is now stated. If any of his Colleagues sitting on the bench opposite are going to take part in the discussion, I presume they have been made acquainted with his views. There can be no doubt that Sheriff Ivory acted in the *bonâ fide* belief that the Lord Advocate had approved of the publication of the Report in the newspapers; and what the Government had to consider was whether an error—which was merely a misconception of what took place at an interview—was one which should be visited with liability for the payment of this £200? As a matter of fact, Sheriff Ivory had been discharging the duty of a public servant under great difficulties; and I trust that this House will affirm that it is the duty of the Government to sustain the action of public officers, even when they err, if they act in good faith. That is a point on which I hope the Committee will not give an undecided opinion, and it is the only question raised in the present discussion.

MR. CALDWELL: I think if the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Advocate had referred to the circumstances of the action, he would have seen that it was one which altogether precluded the idea of privilege. I cannot agree that, when an officer takes a certain action in the execution of his duty, he is invariably entitled to the protection of the Treasury. The ground of action in this particular case was that Sheriff Ivory was acting altogether outside his judicial functions. There could have been no action whatever based on the footing that Sheriff Ivory had acted according to the duty that devolved on him; but the sole ground of action was that he published this Report without authority, acting, in so doing, altogether outside his proper functions, and, therefore, having no title to protection. How was the matter decided? The then Lord Advocate stated very clearly that Sheriff Ivory, in publishing a confidential document, had not acted prudently.

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Progress reported.

House resumed.

MOTIONS.

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FRIENDLY SOCIETIES COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That Mr. James Stuart be discharged from the Select Committee on Friendly Societies.

Ordered, That Mr. Cremer be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Arnold Morley.*)

TRIAL BY JURY (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Sexton, Bill to amend the law relating to Trial by Jury in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Sexton, Mr. Hunter, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Edmund Robertson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 150.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 12.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 16.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 8th March, 1889.

Their Lordships met, and having gone through the business on the paper (which consisted of the Second Reading of certain unopposed Private Bills) without debate,

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, till Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 8th March, 1889.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

LONDON CENTRAL (SUBWAY) RAILWAY BILL (*By Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.): I rise for the purpose of moving that this Bill be read a second time on this day six months. It is a Bill which contains provisions of an exceedingly novel character. The line itself goes from nowhere and leads to nowhere; it is an experiment in the shape of construction, and it is to run right through some of the best streets of London—from St. James's Street to Shaftesbury Avenue, and then on to Holborn Circus. It will disturb people who have only recently been enabled to settle down in the locality; it will produce a great hindrance to trade; and, in addition, the Company will not be compelled to take the whole of the property their projected line will interfere with, because by one of the provisions of the Bill they can take what portion of a particular property they choose—that is to say, they can take the underground portion of a shop without being compelled to take that which is above ground. It runs through a street which is now one of the leading lines of communication between the North and South of London, and the competition which will necessarily spring up between the omnibuses and the railway for the traffic of the district will, in the end, be ruinous to both. So far as the capital is concerned, it is to consist of 74,950 ordinary shares of £10 each, and 500 deferred shares of £1 each, and the management and control of the undertaking will be virtually in the hands of the deferred shareholders. This is certainly one of the most novel features we have yet seen in connection with railway enterprize. There is another curious feature—namely, power to sell the railway to the London County Council, and when we come to look at the amount of capital proposed to be spent, the means of communication which already exist, and have regard to the fact that the undertaking is to be carried on solely by five gentlemen acting as directors, I think the House will agree with me that it is not a Bill that ought to be passed.

*MR. GAINSFORD BRUCE (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to second the Amendment, and I regret that in addressing the House for the first time

I should have to ask the House to do what it is ordinarily very reluctant to do —namely, reject a Private Bill on the Second Reading. I hope, however, to be able to place before the House reasons why the Bill should be rejected. It is a scheme for carrying a railway from the top of St. James's Street to Holborn Circus in three sections—(No. 1) from St. James's Street to (No. 2) the south west corner of Shaftesbury Avenue; from Shaftesbury Avenue to Oxford Street, and (No. 3) from Oxford Street to Holborn Circus. The line, when constructed, will not be in communication with any other line of railway. The promoters may say that it is the beginning of a new system, and that it is capable of indefinite extension; but when we consider the enormous inconvenience and interference with traffic which must result from the carrying out of extensive works in great thoroughfares of London, I think hon. Members will concur with me that it ought not to be left to private individuals to lay down a line a mile and a-half in length between any points that caprice may determine in the centre of London, leaving it to chance or accident to determine whether hereafter the scheme is capable of such development as to form a connecting link between distant parts of the Metropolis. In my opinion the public have suffered in times past from the too great readiness of Parliament to sanction partially developed railway schemes. Already London is cut up by railways; and the public, although they have suffered the maximum of inconvenience, have as yet derived only the minimum of accommodation. The line, when constructed, is to be worked by electricity. Professors of science, who also claim to be prophets, tell us that electricity is destined to supersede steam as the locomotive power; I am not concerned to doubt their prophecy, but all I say is that the time has not yet arrived. With the exception of the toy railway at Brighton, I am not aware that at present there is a single line which is worked by electricity, and it has not yet been determined that electricity can be used with such regularity and certainty as is necessary for business purposes. I think some stress ought to be laid on the humidity of the climate with which the electricians will have to cope. The undertaking is put forward as an experiment, but I wish the hon. Members for Stoke-upon-Trent (Mr. W. L. Bright) and Wolverhampton (Sir W. Plowden), whose names are on the back of the Bill, had, in the first instance, tried it in their own districts before attempting to carry it out in the Metropolis. I maintain that not only is the scheme in itself impracticable, but that the means by which it is proposed to carry it out are indicative of the unsoundness of the proposals in the Bill. The promoters seem to have ransacked every Parliamentary precedent in order to take advantage of every clause at any time sanctioned granting special favours to promoters of companies, so that the Company ask for the maximum of privilege and the public are deprived of nearly all the protection which the Land Clauses Act was intended to provide. For the first time in the history of legislation the promoters have introduced the principle of founders' shares. In comparatively recent times founders' shares have been introduced in Limited Liability Companies, founded on contract. It may be right, when a number of persons are brought together, to carry out a proposal that a founder should be remunerated somehow or other, but a proposal to pay a founder 900 per cent of the funds of the Company is very novel indeed, and involves a principle which I think the House will be very jealous to sanction. It may be right where the shareholders come in by agreement upon particular terms to pay 900 per cent, but this House cannot by Act of Parliament turn £500 into £5,000, and yet that is what this Bill does. Having regard to the fact that the Bill is an experiment, and taking into account also the mode by which it is proposed to carry it out, I think the House will do well to reject it.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Seager Hunt.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. W. L. BRIGHT (Stoke-upon-Trent): There seems to be a great deal of misapprehension in regard to this Bill. The hon. Member for West Marylebone (Mr. Seager Hunt) began by saying that it is proposed to take

underground property and leave that which is overhead. If he will take the trouble to examine the Bill, he will find that it is not true. Then he said that in certain streets omnibuses are careering to and fro from morning till night. That is exactly what we say—namely, that the street traffic is so great that it is necessary to divert some of it. As to the founders' shares, they are simply deferred shares, and they are provided for the simple purpose of paying the expenses of those who will have to construct the railway. The interest upon them will, however, be deferred until 5 per cent on the ordinary capital has been paid to the ordinary shareholders of the Company. I submit that if the Metropolitan and District Railways had been made upon this principle anyone who embarked his capital at the commencement of those schemes would, up to the present moment, never have realized a single sixpence out of them. So far as the clause in the Bill relating to the voting power of the deferred shareholders is concerned, we abandon the provision altogether, and agree that the ordinary shareholders shall have full control of the Company, and that the qualification of directors shall also be decided by the shareholders. The clause entitling the London County Council to buy the railway is a usual one, and simply entitles the Council to find money or take shares. Hon. Members will be aware that the City of London subscribed £300,000 to the Metropolitan Railway. These, however, are all of them questions of detail, and I submit that they can only be discussed properly in a Committee upstairs. The shopkeepers of Holborn oppose the Bill, and I find that a gentleman named Wallace has taken the chair at one or two meetings which have been called in opposition to the Bill. Mr. Wallace is a large shopkeeper in Holborn, and he is very indignant at this scheme; but I find that in 1884 this very gentleman stated that some thousands of persons were daily resorting to his premises from all parts of the Metropolis and the suburbs, and that any scheme that would give facilities of access cheaply, expeditiously, and comfortably, would be a boon. In the face of this declaration, can the House consider that the opposition of this gentleman is worth much? It is said that the omnibus fare is only one penny. Well, we are only going to charge a penny. But I submit that all the difficulties which have been raised are difficulties which ought to be settled in Committee; we are perfectly ready to face the Committee. We believe that we have sufficient evidence to prove our case; and we ask this House to read the Bill a second time.

*SIR R. N. FOWLER (London): I have presented a petition, Sir, very numerously signed, from my constituency against this Bill. It seems to me to involve a new movement as regards underground railways, and that we are hardly in a position to deal with the question piecemeal until this House has investigated the whole subject. Nearly 30 years ago, a very influential Committee of this House, presided over by the present Earl of Derby, inquired into the railway system of London. I think that the Metropolis owes a great deal to the labours of that Committee; and before we enter into the question again, I think it is desirable that we should appoint a strong Committee to inquire into the whole subject.

MR. ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I wish to enter my most emphatic protest against a Member of Parliament using the machinery of this House for the purpose of promoting public Companies in order to foist shares upon a misguided and gulled public. In this case we have an hon. Member, who represents Stoke-upon-Trent, coming here to teach the Metropolitan Members what is necessary for the benefit of London. We, the Metropolitan Members, are rather a numerous body, and we fancy that we know quite as much about London as an hon. Member who represents a constituency like Stoke-upon-Trent. And what is it that the hon. Member wishes the House to do? He asks us to sanction an additional expenditure of a million of money upon an underground railway, when many millions have already been expended on similar undertakings, and up to the present day the unfortunate shareholders have not received sixpence in the shape of dividends. I do not think that the machinery of the House of Commons ought to be employed in order to foist such schemes upon the public.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I cannot help regarding this scheme as one of the most foolish propositions ever submitted to this House. It is a Bill introduced in the interests of the Metropolis, yet the name of no Metropolitan Member is on the back of it; the only names which appear are those of the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent and the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. I think that if those hon. Members would devote a little more of their time to their own constituents instead of to the Metropolis their services would be of considerably more value than they are at present. Of all the streets of which we ought to be proud in London, St. James's Street is one of them. It is one of the finest streets in this capital or in any capital in Europe, and yet it is proposed to run an underground railway from the top end of it to Holborn Circus. I think it is most undesirable that such a railway should be allowed to run through the heart of London, and I can only characterize the circular sent to Members of this House this morning by the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent as an outrage upon good taste.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The hon. Member who has just sat down commenced by saying that this is a Bill which concerns the Metropolitan Members alone; therefore, as representing Newcastle-under-Lyme, he gives us his views on the subject. The hon. Member attacked the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent, and he says that a circular has been sent round by which my hon. Friend is an outrage upon the House. I do not think it necessary to make any further reply than this—that the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down is an Unionist. Then, again, there was the hon. Member for Stepney (Mr. Isaacson). I never heard such arguments addressed to this House. If the hon. Member would bring forward a proposal that no Member of this House should be a Director of a Company, that would be a matter for discussion, but to say that he will oppose a Bill because of the Members whose names are on the back of it is going a little too far.

MR. ISAACSON: What I said was, that this was a Bill proposed by Members of Parliament who have no connection with the locality which it affects.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The hon. Gentleman protested against the use of the machinery of Parliament for the purpose of carrying Railway Bills. But how can a railway be made without the consent of Parliament? I came, as I always do, with a very open mind to the consideration of this measure. If my mind was closed at all, it was to a certain extent closed against the Bill, because I thought it contained an improper clause—namely, the clause which threw the voting power into the hands of a few individuals. That clause, however, has been entirely given up by the promoters of the Bill, and I find it is an entire mistake to suppose that there is any intention on the part of the promoters to take portions of houses. The proposal is simply this: to be allowed to take any portion of a cellar running under the roadway without being obliged to take the rest of the house. In the event of a dispute, the matter, by the Bill, is to be referred to a jury, so that full and ample compensation may be given to the owner of the house for any injury he may sustain. I do not, therefore, think that that is a point which ought to prevent us from referring the Bill to a Committee. It is said that the Bill will involve a disturbance of the streets and a hindrance to the traffic; but that is an argument against any improvement in the Metropolis. No doubt the construction of this Railway will disturb the streets, but I find that the Bill provides that a large subway shall be made by the Company to carry all the gas and water pipes, and I apprehend that when that subway is made the disturbance of the streets will be much less than it is at present, for we know by painful experience that at the present moment the streets are being taken up every day by some gas or water company. There will be a disturbance for once and all, and it will then, to a great extent, cease. We are told that we ought not to pass this Bill because it is likely to injure the omnibus traffic; but that is similar to the argument that was used against the institution of railways—namely, that they would injure the stage coaches. I, as an inhabitant of London, and one of the public, think that this line will be of great advantage to the public, and for that reason I shall vote in favour of it. I have no personal interest in it except as one of the public. The Member for the

City of London (Sir R. Fowler) tells us that we ought to appoint a Committee to investigate the railway system in London. We have already had a Committee, and it gave us the Underground Railway system that already exists in London, and this Bill simply proposes to add to it. The real question is this, whether *primâ facie* this is a system which ought to be submitted to a Select Committee, and I think it is.

*MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): No doubt this is a scheme which involves many proposals of considerable novelty. It proposes to run under a very important part of London, commencing from the top of St. James' Street, and it proposes to use a power of locomotion which as yet has been practically untried. There may be some practical difficulty in carrying out the scheme, and the line may prove to be unworkable, but I think the case presented by the promoters is one which is entitled to reasonable examination. It will be backed up by guarantees of the usual character, and all doubtful questions, whether engineering or financial, or the relations between the Company and the Metropolitan authorities, will be closely examined by a Committee, to which alone we can look for a solution of such questions. I do not think that the hon. Member for Holborn (Mr. Gainsford Bruce), who spoke with great ability against the Bill, adduced a single argument which might not be brought against any scheme, or which ought to prevent us from referring the Bill to a Select Committee in the usual form. There was one provision in the Bill which was of a character that I think no Committee would pass, and if it were accepted by a Committee I do not think it would be sanctioned by the House itself—namely, the proposal that the founders' shares should be able to outvote or to nullify any vote of the ordinary shareholders. It was a provision rashly inserted in the Bill, and I am glad to hear from the hon. Member for Stoke-upon-Trent that it has been entirely abandoned. The mere creation of founders' shares is an item of novelty, but it does not appear to be one that ought not to be investigated with perfect fulness. There may be no reason for believing that founders' shares, properly controlled, may not be a judicious way of meeting the preliminary expenses of schemes of this nature. I would suggest to the House that we should act upon the ordinary principles which guide us in regard to Private Bills, and refer this measure to a Select Committee, who will have full power to consider all the points which have been raised.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): As a Metropolitan Member and one who has been in London all his life, I think the great object we ought to have at heart is the provision of facilities for moving readily and cheaply from one part of the Metropolis to the other. Now, the only argument I have heard against this railway is that it is an experiment. If the House of Commons had thrown out every railway scheme which was an experiment, I am afraid that we should have been in a state of barbarism as regards travelling at this moment. I have no doubt that if this scheme can be successfully carried out it will be of immense value. The idea that it will ruin the omnibus traffic is a very old, fashioned notion. The Underground Railway, so far from ruining the omnibuses as was originally predicted, has greatly added to their traffic.

MR. SEAGER HUNT: What I said, or meant to say, was that the omnibus fares at this moment are very low, and that the construction of this railway is likely to bring about a competition between the omnibuses and the railway which will reduce the fares and make the traffic ruinous to both parties.

*MR. BARTLEY: That is the argument which was used when the omnibus fares were much higher than they are now, but the London General Omnibus Company manage to pay a dividend of 10 per cent. I trust that the Bill will, as is usual in such cases, be referred to a Select Committee, and that the scheme will prove to be a useful addition to the system of underground railways.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): It is very rarely that I take part in the discussion of a Private Bill, but I think that we should be adopting a strong course if we were to refuse to refer this or any other Railway Bill to a Select Committee. There are, no doubt, questions of great importance involved in this proposal, but they will receive full consideration at the hands of

a Committee, and the House must recollect that in reading the Bill a second time it will not be parting with its jurisdiction in the matter, because if, after the investigation upstairs, the House is dissatisfied with the proposals contained in the Bill, it will always have the power of throwing it out upon the Third Reading. I quite agree with the hon. Member for Islington (Mr. Bartley) that it is of the utmost importance to provide all classes of society, and especially the humbler classes, with facilities for cheap travelling. To throw out a Bill of this kind on the Second Reading would, I think, be an unusual and an unwise course, and therefore, although I do not often vote upon a Private Bill, I shall vote in favour of this.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I am not going to oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, but I propose to reserve to myself the right to oppose it upon the Third Reading if I think it necessary. I came down to the House determined to vote against the Second Reading, but the promoters have now withdrawn some of the most objectionable clauses. I think the Bill is one which might be carefully investigated by a Select Committee.

Question "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and referred to a Select Committee.

MOTIONS.

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KILSYTH AND BONNYBRIDGE RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That the Order [27th February] that the Kilsyth and Bonnybridge Railway Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills be read and discharged.

Ordered, That the Bill be withdrawn.—(*Mr. Herbert Gardner.*)

EXPERIMENTS ON LIVING ANIMALS BILL.

Address for Copy of the Report from the Inspector showing the number of Experiments performed on Living Animals during the year 1888, under licences granted under the Act, 39 and 40 Vic. c. 77, distinguishing painless from painful Experiments (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 186, of Session 1888).—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

GUNS AND PROJECTILES (PALLISER SYSTEM) BILL.

Address for Return of number of Guns converted on the Palliser system, and of the approximate weight of the Shot and Shell cast on the Palliser system.—(*Col. Nolan.*)

QUESTIONS.

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IRELAND—CONSTABLE M'NEANY.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lietenant of Ireland if it has been reported to him that Constable M'Neany pointed in a threatening manner his revolver at a man named Patrick O'Donnell, on 28th January, in County Donegal; if other constables have been reported in a similar way; and, if he will make inquiries as to complaints on the subject?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): The Constabulary Authorities report that it is the case that O'Donnell has alleged that the constable pointed a revolver at him, and threatened to shoot him. The case has been returned for trial at the Assizes to be held in a few days. No other constables appear to have been reported in a similar way. I shall, of course, make full inquiry as to any specific complaints on the subject.

INFRINGEMENTS OF THE COAL MINES REGULATION ACT, 1888.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the workmen employed in Knockterra Pit appointed Mr. Keir Hardie, their Union Secretary, to intimate to the manager their appointment of a check-weigher; whether the manager refused to accept the intimation from Mr. Hardie; whether the Mines Inspector for the district refused to interfere in the matter; and, whether, in view of these facts, a body of workmen have not power to appoint their Union Secretary to make an intimation on their behalf; and, if they have such power, on what grounds the Inspector of Mines refused to prosecute the manager for a breach of "The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1888," in having prevented the check-weigher from performing his duties after such legal notice had been given? I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether notice of the election of a check-weigher at Knockterra Pit was made to the manager in writing, signed by two of the workmen; whether, on

the morning following the said notice being given, the two men signing it were dismissed and the check-weigher prevented by force from performing his duty; and, whether this case was reported to the Inspector of Mines, who caused an investigation to be made, and found the facts to be as recited above; and, if so, whether it is in contemplation to prosecute the manager for a contravention of the provisions of the Mines Act; and, if not, can he explain for what reason?

THE HOME SECRETARY (Mr. H. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, East): Mr. Keir Hardie wrote a letter to the overman of the Knockterra pit informing him that Richard Young had been duly elected check-weigher by the miners employed in the pit. He did not state that he was appointed by the workmen to give this notice, and the owners of the pit refused to accept it. The inspector, on being appealed to, wrote to both parties, saying it was a pity that such disputes should arise, and pointing out that, in his opinion, the owners were entitled to an intimation from the workmen themselves and not from an outsider. Afterwards, two workmen in the pit left a letter for Mr. Angus, the manager, informing him that they had been appointed by the workmen to give him notice of the appointment of a check-weigher, and after Mr. Angus had received this letter the check-weigher was installed in his position. In the meantime, the two workmen had been dismissed by the overman, not for giving the notice, but for absenting themselves from work. They have since been reinstated, and are at work again. On the general question I have nothing to add to what I said in the House on the 28th ult.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether a notice tendered on behalf of the workmen by the general secretary of their Association is insufficient under the provisions of the Act?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I must decline to give an opinion on a legal question arising under the Act. The section is not explicit as to the manner in which the notice is to be given. I gave the best answer I could on the 28th of last month, and I will not take upon myself to say what, in all cases, will be sufficient.

IRELAND—FATHER STEPHENS.

MR. BLANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether part of the evidence against the Rev. Daniel Stephens, of Falcarragh, county Donegal, who was recently sentenced for conspiracy against payment of rents to six months' imprisonment in Londonderry Gaol, was statements made on oath as witness before two Resident Magistrates sitting under the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, which statements were used against him in his own trial; and, if so, can he state if such be English Court practice except in case of perjury; if the second part of the case consisted of evidence of a letter found in a drawer at the house of the Rev. James M'Fadden, P.P. Gweedore, said to be in handwriting of defendant; whether any proof of publicity amongst the tenants of the Olphert estate were given at trial; and, if he can state the grounds of decision relied on by Resident Magistrates?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that the defendant has appealed. I am, therefore, precluded at the present time from making any statement in regard to the evidence produced or with respect to the grounds of the decision come to.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state as a matter of fact whether a portion of the evidence produced against Mr. Stephens was evidence he had given himself in the case of another defendant?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I would rather not answer Questions on this matter, as an appeal is pending.

DRAWING IN SCHOOLS.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, before the issue of the Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in January, extending to Scotland the provision that no grant for drawing should be made on account of girls to whom cookery is not also taught, due account was taken of the circumstances of Scotch mixed schools and the

opinions of Scotch educational authorities; whether he is aware that the effect of this restriction in England has been largely to crush out the teaching of drawing to both boys and girls in mixed schools; whether it is anticipated that this will be the case in Scotland under the new Minute; and, whether, since this is in direct conflict with the advice of the Report of the Royal Commission on Technical Instruction, and of both the majority and minority of the Royal Commission on Elementary Education, in all of which the extension of drawing teaching is strongly recommended, he can see his way to remove the restriction?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): The form in which the Minute was issued was due to an understanding with the Treasury that Scotland should be placed on an equality with England, but there is no reason, so far as I know, why the change should have the effect my hon. Friend seems to anticipate, seeing that in mixed schools boys alone may be taught drawing, as, I believe, is largely done in England. Further changes in the English Code are in prospect which will, I hope, facilitate and promote the teaching of drawing to both boys and girls.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): Was the Scotch Education Department consulted before the Minute was issued?

SIR W. HART DYKE: I apprehend that was the case; but I have no right to answer positively in the absence of my right hon. Friend the Lord Advocate.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): When is it proposed to lay the new Code on the Table?

SIR W. HART DYKE: The new Code will be placed on the Table well within the limit of time—probably within the next fortnight.

IRELAND — THE TREATMENT OF MICHAEL DAVITT IN THE CONVICT PRISONS.

MR. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to Mr. Michael Davitt's letter, which appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of 4th March instant, in which he states that, having been tried and convicted in 1870, on a charge of treason-felony, he was degraded to the level of a non-political prisoner; is it true that he was so treated, and dressed like a convict in Portland in 1881-2, or did he receive any exceptional indulgence; and, when in Dartmoor, was he made to wear a collar and yoked to a cart to do the work of a beast of burden?

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): With the assent of the Home Secretary, as part of this Question relates to a matter in my knowledge, I will answer that portion of the hon. Member's Question. What I have to reply to is the second paragraph of the Question. As to what took place on the first imprisonment of Michael Davitt, I know nothing. It was not under my administration. But as to what took place in 1881-2 I will reply. The hon. Member asks whether Davitt was treated and dressed as a convict in Portland, or whether he received any exceptional indulgence. I will first answer that in the words of Davitt himself. He wrote a letter to me—very much to my surprise—immediately he was released from Portland. In it he says—

"Learning since my release from Portland that I am indebted to you for whatever kind treatment I have received while incarcerated there, I beg you will accept this as an expression of my grateful acknowledgment of such kindness."

That is the first answer, and they are his thanks for the exceptional treatment he received. As it is a matter of some importance, I will tell the hon. Gentleman what the exceptional treatment was. Mr. Michael Davitt was arrested on February 4, a Friday, and I gave immediate directions that he was not to be treated as an ordinary convict, and I wish it to be quite understood that I acted on my own personal responsibility as Secretary of State, on the authority of the Prisons Act, by which the control of all prisons and prisoners is vested in and exercised by the Secretary of State. So that the Home Secretary is the prison authority. The Prison Commissioners are stated in the 6th section to be appointed for the purpose of aiding the Secretary of State in carrying out the provisions of the Act, and in the 9th section they are ordered in the exercise of their powers

to conform to any directions of the Secretary of State which they may receive from time to time. Therefore I considered it my duty to determine and order how Mr. Davitt should be treated. I accordingly sent for Sir E. Du Cane, one of the ablest administrators I have ever come across, and told him what my views were, and desired him to communicate them to the Governor of Portland Prison. As far as my recollection goes, Sir E. Du Cane entirely coincided with my view, although I need hardly say, if he had not done so, he would have loyally carried it out. Mr. Davitt having been arrested upon the Friday, on the Monday, February 7, I was asked a Question in the House of Commons upon the subject, and I stated then that Mr. Davitt was to be removed to Portland, and was not to have his hair cut. The next thing I directed was that he should not be moved in his prison clothes. These, of course, were special directions in his case. Immediately upon his being removed to Portland, I had an application, which I also stated to the House—indeed, everything I did in this matter was stated to the House of Commons in the presence of a very experienced Home Secretary, Sir Richard Cross, who could have challenged my conduct if he had thought it open to observation. This application I refer to was made on February 11th, and was from a private friend of Mr. Davitt's, to see him. That was not allowed by the prison rules. I ought to have mentioned, when I referred to the Prisons Act, that the convict prisons are not under the Prisons Act, but the authority of the Secretary of State is the same; in fact, if it be possible, he has more absolute control over the convict prisons than he has over the ordinary prisons. This friend of Mr. Davitt's was the wife of an honoured and respected Member of this House, now unfortunately deceased, I mean the late Mr. A. M. Sullivan. Mrs. Sullivan wished to see Mr. Davitt, and I wished her to see Mr. Davitt for two reasons. I wanted his friends to be satisfied with his treatment, and I wanted to be satisfied with their report myself, and not merely with official reports. The constant communication, which passed between Mr. Sullivan and myself at that time were the foundation of a friendship which, I am sorry to say, lasted too short a time. Mrs. Sullivan visted Mr. Davitt, and from that moment down to a year after the imprisonment of Mr. Davitt there never was a question or complaint in this House as to his treatment. I ordered constant visits of his friends not allowable by prison rules, and there were other female friends of Mr. Davitt who wished to see him. [*A laugh.*] I do not see why hon. Members should laugh. I will tell you why I preferred that these ladies should visit him. I treated him as a political prisoner, and I said that I did not think it desirable that his political colleagues should visit him, but I wished his personal friends to do so. That was the distinction I drew. I ordered also that his own personal friend and medical adviser, Dr. Kennedy, should visit him. He did so, and reported to me constantly upon his condition, and I have those reports still. I said there were no further questions asked in the House of Commons until March 20th, more than a year after his imprisonment. On March 20th, 1882, I made a statement in this House of all the particulars of the treatment of Mr. Davitt. It is in *Hansard*, and my statement was made in the face of this House, so that my conduct could be challenged and I could, if necessary, be called to account. I said—

"I not only wished to satisfy myself but also the friends of Mr. Davitt by allowing friends of his to visit him, and they have reported to me privately in a satisfactory manner. I could not give those private reports, but I see one of those visitors has published a letter in an American paper, in which he said:—'You will be glad to hear that Mr. Davitt is well, and that he has increased six pounds in weight since I last saw him, that he has no complaint to make, that he seems in wonderful spirits, and that he reads and writes every day.'"

I had given orders that he should receive writing materials and whatever books he desired. This, of course, was contrary to all prison rules—

"Mr. Davitt," his friend says, "is in the enjoyment of excellent health, and has nothing to complain of in his treatment. He is in as good spirits as if he were outside; satisfied with his diet and sleeping accommodation, and he takes an intense pleasure in the care of his garden."

I wish to mention another thing. I ordered that he should not consort with any of the other convicts. I gave a direction that he should not be put to any disagreeable labour, and that

he was to amuse himself in the garden; and his friend called it "his garden." As a fact, it was the Governor's garden which he so much enjoyed. "To wind up," his friend said, "we can say that his health has materially improved, and that he is now sound and strong." And I added at the time—

"I thought that a man in his position would require mental as well as physical recreation, and, therefore, I have ordered that what books he wishes he should be allowed to use, and that he should have the use also of writing materials. These have been a great satisfaction to him. I have also permitted his friends to see him, and I do not think that they will take an improper advantage of that permission. This will allow his friends to satisfy themselves as to his condition."

Then, Sir, a question was put to me by the hon. and learned Member for Longford—"Have you not refused him *Hansard?*" I confessed that I had not thought of that, and I gave the answer that—

"If anyone likes to read *Hansard* he may do so as far as I am concerned. I should have thought that would have been an additional punishment."

The only point on which Sir E. Du Cane expressed any doubt as to Mr. Davitt's treatment was as to whether *Hansard* should be allowed him. On consideration I thought that if Mr. Davitt wished to have *Hansard* for the purposes of the writing on which he was engaged, he should have *Hansard*, and he did have *Hansard*. That is the history of the prison treatment of Mr. Davitt upon which the hon. Member has asked a Question. Now, just to sum up what the exceptional treatment was, Mr. Davitt had a separate and comfortable room where he could read and write; he had a supply of writing materials and books, including *Hansard;* he was not allowed to consort with convicts; he had no irksome occupation, but occupied himself in an agreeable way in the garden; and he received visits from his friends. There is another point I ought to refer to, and that is with regard to the prison clothes. Now, I have already said that Mr. Davitt, when he was removed to Portland, was moved in his own clothes and not in prison clothess. I was not asked, I think, in this House, but I made a statement on this matter at the very beginning; and I said I thought prison clothes could not be dispensed with, because if he were allowed to wear his own clothes they might facilitate escape. From that time, as far as I can recollect, there was no question in this House, and I do not find that in any correspondence the matter of the prison clothes was pressed upon me. Mr. Davitt wore the prison clothes all the time he was at Portland; but if the matter had been pressed upon me, all I can say now is that, as in the case of *Hansard*, I think I should have dispensed with them. These are the facts of the case. When I was consulted by Lord Spencer as to the treatment of Irish prisoners I referred to the details of this case, and I recommended him in a letter that I have already read to the House to follow the example I had set. I thank the House for having enabled me to make this statement, I have told the hon. Member that my determination was that Mr. Davitt should not be treated as a convict, and he was not so treated. In that respect I followed, I believe, the course taken by my predecessors and by my successors; and if anybody had desired to challenge that course of conduct, it was stated in the House of Commons, and they had the opportunity here and at the time to do so. Having stated these facts as to the treatment of Mr. Davitt, I confess I was a little surprised—I am not going into details—at the tone of Mr. Davitt's letter on which this Question was founded; but I do not complain, because in these days one ought not to be surprised at anything.

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid that the hon. Member will find my answer most uninteresting and *jejune* after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman speaks from the fulness of his personal knowledge, while my answer contains only such particulars as I have been able to gather from the official sources at my command, Mr. Davitt, while at Portland in 1881-2, was clothed as a convict, but on medical grounds he was at once located in the infirmary in the usual course, and was there allowed such indulgences as were expressly recommended by the medical officer, including the use of books and writing materials. The Secretary of State himself verbally expressed the desire that every consideration should be shown to Mr. Davitt. While at Dartmoor in 1872 and subsequent years Mr. Davitt was employed as an ordinary convict, and had to assist, with five

others, in drawing a cart with a yoke made of webbing placed on the shoulder and passed across the breast.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): Under whose Administration was Mr. Davitt first imprisoned, and who was Home Secretary at the time?

MR. MATTHEWS: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was Premier in 1872, and Mr. Bruce, now Lord Aberdare, was Home Secretary.

THE BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883.

COLONEL HILL (Bristol, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Trustees under the Bankruptcy Act, and the estates which they represent, are now put to considerable expense in disclaiming leasehold and other onerous property which is of no value to the debtor's estate, but which must be disclaimed in order to avoid personal liability; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to propose any amendment of the law with the view of diminishing such expense?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The alterations in the law relating to the disclaimer of onerous property effected by Section 55 of the present Bankruptcy Act have undoubtedly been a serious source of expense to bankrupt estates, as has been pointed out in the Annual Reports presented to Parliament by the Board of Trade, and the Board of Trade are in communication with the Lord Chancellor on the subject, with the view of ascertaining whether any measures can be adopted to diminish such expense.

IRELAND—MR. CECIL ROCHE, R.M.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is it the fact that Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., after presiding at the trial of Mr. Wm. O'Brien, M.P., at Killarney, proceeded with the accused to Tralee, and followed the vehicle containing the prisoner through the streets of Tralee; that Mr. Roche, finding the townspeople cheering Mr. O'Brien, ordered them to be prosecuted, and, in the case of at least one of them (Mr. M. Stack), swore a deposition before another Resident Magistrate (Capt. Welch); that upon Mr. Roche's evidence, Mr. Stack was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, or to give bail for his good behaviour, for cheering for Mr. O'Brien; was this trial held in the police barracks, and was this legal under the Petty Sessions Act; can the deposition made by Mr. Roche be laid upon the Table; and, is there any precedent under the Crimes Act of 1882 for this blending of judicial and administrative functions by Resident Magistrates, or for their acting in this way in cases where they have sat as Judges?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that Mr. Roche, on the occasion in question, accompanied on his way home Captain Welch, who was in charge of the forces, and who was going in the same direction. Mr. Roche did not take any part in the management of the forces, nor did he direct any prosecution. He did, when required to do so, give sworn testimony as to the riotous behaviour of Mr. Stack. Mr. Stack was ordered to find bail to be of good behaviour, or in default to be imprisoned. He found bail, as did the others charged on that occasion. I see no ground to adopt the unusual course suggested of laying the deposition on the table.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the part of the Question which asks if the trial was held in the police barracks, and whether that was legal under the Petty Sessions Act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Notice of the Question was not given me in time to get those particulars.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It has been on the Paper the last two days. I will put it down for Monday. I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why did Mr. Cecil Roche cease to be employed as Legal Sub-Commissioner under the Land Act, 1881, when he received £1,000 per annum travelling expenses; and, is it the case that since he was disemployed under the Land Commission other Legal Sub-Commissioners have been appointed by that body, although Mr. Roche's salary as Resident Magistrate is only £425 and allowances?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The appointment held by Mr. Roche as Legal Assistant Commissioner was an annual one. He was re-appointed by Lord Spencer no less than four times, and, I

understand, was informed by all the heads of the Commission that they were perfectly satisfied with the manner in which he had discharged his duties. He was not appointed by the present Government as an Assistant Commissioner, nor did he subsequently seek to be so re-appointed. His present remuneration as a Resident Magistrate is £425 and allowances.

IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS.

MR. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Poor Law Guardians of Clones and other Unions in Ireland have declined to certify to the Local Government Board, as required by the Probate Duties Act of 1888, that the contributory grant to National teachers is included under the head of "Salaries, &c." as they are empowered to do by that Statute; and, whether he, as head of the Local Government Board, will take steps to enforce this necessary requirement to be complied with, so that an equitable proportion of the Probate Duty Grant shall be applied to supplement the miserable salaries of National teachers in such Unions as do not otherwise become contributory?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member appears to be under some misapprehension. By Section 3 of the Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1888, the basis of the allocation of the grant is confined to the amount expended by the Guardians on the salaries and renumeration, &c., of the officers of the Union in connection with the relief of the poor or under the Medical Charities Act of 1851. Consequently, in making the allocation, no account can be taken of sums contributed or paid by the Guardians under the National School Teachers Act.

PROVISIONAL ORDERS.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what steps are being taken by the Board in reference to making Provisional Orders, as directed by Section 52 of the Local Government Act of last Session, in the case of boroughs and sanitary districts in the same area, and when such Provisional Orders will be introduced for confirmation by Parliament?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board have in each of the cases referred to directed a local inquiry by one of their inspectors, and the several inquiries have now been held. The preparation of the Orders which are required is being proceeded with, but before the Orders are issued the drafts will be forwarded to the local authorities. There will be no delay that can be avoided in submitting the Orders to Parliament for Confirmation.

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION—ACCOMMODATION FOR ANNUAL MEETINGS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what acreage of Government land the War Office has placed at the disposal of the National Rifle Association; for what portion of the year, for how many years, and upon what terms; and whether, as stated in the *Times*, it is the intention of the War Office to acquire control of Bisley Common and to place it together with the land it already holds at the disposal of the Association; and, if so, what is the agreement or understanding with the Association as to Bisley Common?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No detailed arrangements for the user of Government land have yet been made, as I have not yet received official intimation that the Brookwood site has been finally adopted. I have intimated informally to the Association that if they will grant the War Department the user over the land at Brookwood which they may purchase, I would take steps to extinguish the common rights over a wedge-shaped plot of Bisley Common which juts into War Department property, and allow the Association the user of it. Such an arrangement would add considerably to the ground in the neighbourhood of Aldershot available for military manœuvres.

MARAUDING AT SIERRA LEONE

SIR R. FOWLER (London): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for

the Colonies whether he has received information as to a coroner's inquest held at Free Town, Sierra Leone, on February 1st last, on the body of the Chief, Gabanna Gombo, brought as a political prisoner from the Gallinas country, who died on January 26th; whether he is aware that it was alleged before the jury that the prisoner died of strangulation, having during four days been tied round the neck and other parts of his body with a rope, on the excuse that no handcuffs were available, and that the jury were only persuaded to pass a verdict of "death resulting from blood poisoning, the effect of ill-usage," on the coroner's promise that the facts of the case should be reported to the authorities with a recommendation that the police officers in charge of the prisoner be brought to justice; whether any action is being taken in accordance with this compromise; and whether he can acquaint the House with the circumstances under which a native chief who has for a long time been an ally of the British Government in its advances in the West Coast of Africa has been thus severely dealt with.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron DE WORMS, Liverpool, East Toxteth): This chief, who cannot correctly be styled a political prisoner, was conveyed as a prisoner to Sierra Leone, having been guilty of marauding and raiding a short time after he had been present at a meeting of chiefs when they were warned that such practices must cease. We have not heard officially of the inquest; but the Governor has reported the chief's death, owing to blood poisoning, in consequence of a wound caused by the rope with which he was secured. This treatment is very much to be regretted; and the Governor has issued a strict order to the police that as a rule handcuffs only should be used, and that when it is unavoidable to tie prisoners, great care should be taken that no injury or undue harshness is permitted; and that any remissness will be severely dealt with.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Has anything been done to the police officers who dragged the man along with a rope; have they been suspended and tried, or are they still at work and in full pay?

MR. PICTON (Leicester): When the right hon. Gentleman says that an independent chief has been guilty of marauding, does he mean that the man was guilty of making war?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I cannot give a definition of marauding.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquiries as to what has been done to the policemen?

DR. CLARK: May I call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the third paragraph of the question, which he has not answered?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: I have given an answer. I said I have not heard of the inquest officially; until I do I cannot give the hon. Member any further information.

LIVERPOOL BOARD OF CUSTOMS.

MR. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the action, at Liverpool in February last, of the Deputy-Chairman of the Board of Customs in ordering the immediate dissolution of the joint committee of the examining officers and outdoor officers of Customs, censuring the members of that committee and other officers, and ordering the removal to other posts of five examining officers and six outdoor officers; whether the committee had been guilty of any breach of existing regulations which justified such action; and, if not, whether he will instruct the Board of Customs to remove the censure passed on the officers and the interdict on their association; what was the reason of the removal of the officers from Liverpool; and whether they have been restored to their former positions?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds N.): I have received a Report from the Commissioners of Customs with reference to the hon. Member's Question. The Treasury does not interfere with matters of discipline in the Revenue Departments unless specially appealed to. In the present case I am informed that the Board of Customs had reason to believe that the committee referred to was organizing opposition throughout the service to the orders of the Board, and the Commissioners took steps for the dissolution of the committee

and for the removal to other ports of certain officers. I am informed that several of the officers selected for removal petitioned to be allowed to remain at Liverpool, and that the Commissioners, their directions having been obeyed, have granted this request.

THE ARREST OF DR. TANNER.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is true that, on the arrival of Dr. Tanner on Sunday morning last in Clonmel, a reporter of the *Tipperary Nationalist* sought admission to the railway station in his professional capacity, and was refused by the police; that he asked for the name of the sergeant in charge, and was also refused and told "to go to the devil"; and that, immediately after, the police charged and bâtoned him, inflicting several wounds; whether it is true that the policeman who committed the assault was fined 21s. at the Clonmel Petty Sessions, on Wednesday, 6th March; and, what notice the Government intends to take of this policeman's conduct?

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Constable Doyle, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, was fined 20s. and costs by the magistrates at Clonmel for unnecessarily using his bâton in Clonmel on the 3rd March, on the occasion of the arrival there of the hon. Member for Mid-Cork?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary authorities report that it is the case that on the arrival of Dr. Tanner at Clonmel a cordon of police, which was keeping back a disorderly crowd, refused admittance to a reporter of the *Tipperary Nationalist*, as they could not let him through without giving an opportunity for others to force their way in also. The two sergeants in charge denied that they refused their names, or heard any offensive expression used to the reporter. The police did not charge until they were severely struck with stones, one constable being knocked down insensible. The reporter appears to have received a blow in the charge, but it is not true that a policeman was fined in respect to it. A man who was arrested in another part of the town, when in the act of picking up a stone, and who resisted arrest, was in the *mêlée* struck with a bâton. For this he summoned Constable Doyle, who was fined in the Borough Court, from which, however, he has appealed.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say how it is the police took upon themselves the right to exclude persons from the railway station? Does the railway station belong to the police, or is it not private property belonging to a Limited Liability Company?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The police have a right to prevent a disorderly mob entering the railway station upon an occasion like that referred to in the Question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the railway station belong to the police, or to a Company?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no official knowledge as to whom it belongs to.

IRELAND—MR. JOHNSON.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, South): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Johnson, who was formerly employed as sub-agent in a landlord's office where Mr. Commissioner Wrench was then the landlord's rent agent, has been promoted to an important office in the Land Commission at a salary of £500 a year; whether Mr. Johnson some time ago appeared before the Sub-Commission, instructing the landlord's solicitor against the fair rent applications of the tenants; whether he is now, or was lately, in charge of that department of the Land Commission which has custody of and control over the lists of prices and the reports furnished by the scrutineers, &c., for the purpose of altering or revising the judicial rents; and, why Mr. Johnson was promoted over the heads of the four Registrars appointed in 1881, and in preference to them and to others in the Land Commission, who were led to believe that they would be treated as Civil Service officials?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He was employed in the office; I do not know whether as a sub-agent. He has not been appointed to a place of £500 a year. He gets £1 1*s.* a week, and his place is temporary. The answer to the second and third paragraph is in the

negative. His duties are confined to clerical and arithmetical work. He has not been promoted over the head of anyone. The Registrars alluded to have much better places. No officials of the Land Commission have been given to understand that they will be treated as Civil Servants.

IRISH BANKS.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what were the circumstances under which the Board of Guardians of the North Dublin Poor Law Union recently applied to the Irish Local Government Board to sanction the substitution of the Munster and Leinster Bank for the Bank of Ireland, as treasurer of the Union: whether the Local Government Board maintain their refusal to sanction the substitution desired by the Guardians; and, whether a copy of the correspondence will be laid upon the Table?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As regards paragraphs 1 and 2, I beg to refer the hon. Member to the reply given by me yesterday to a Question on this subject put by the hon. Member for Dublin County, North. With respect to paragraph 3, I do not see that any public advantage would be gained by following the course suggested. The correspondence is in the hands of the Guardians of the Union, and has already obtained publicity.

MR. SEXTON: As I intend to raise the Question on a future occasion, would it not be of advantage that all the facts contained in the correspondence should be in the hands of Members?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider the point.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. GILL (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant whether Head Constable Preston, in visiting certain prisoners in Millbank without direction from any one, was acting on his own responsibility?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer is in the affirmative.

MR. GILL: Is it the custom to allow a constable to rove about English gaols for the purpose of seeing prisoners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member asks me the Question, I do not know anything about the circumstances, but I have no doubt it is in accordance with the English practice.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As Preston is an Irish Constable, will the right hon. Gentleman tell us what he is doing in England?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe I have answered before that Head Constable Preston was in London on subpœna from the Commission.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does that give him the right to visit gaols, and do the Government approve of a constable brought over here to give evidence taking other duties and functions on himself and visiting prisoners in gaols in the interests of the *Times*?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR did not reply.

MR. GILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in what capacity did Head Constable Preston visit certain prisoners in Millbank; was his application for leave to visit them made in writing; and, in virtue of what consideration or authority was it that Preston was held entitled to have his application to visit these prisoners granted?

MR. MATTHEWS: Head Constable Preston visited the prisoner Tracy on two occasions as the representative of Mr. Soames. The application was made in writing on the first occasion. The second visit was allowed on personal application. The applications were granted in accordance with the usual practice, which I have more than once explained.

MR. SEXTON: Was the prisoner Tracy asked in advance whether these visits were acceptable?

MR. MATTHEWS: I think I have answered that Question once or twice before, but I really do not carry these particulars in my mind.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman says that on the occasion of the first visit a written application was made. Who made the written application?

MR. MATTHEWS: The written application was from Mr. Soames.

MR. GILL: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has any objection to lay the written application on the Table of the House; and I wish to ask the Chief Secretary under what understanding a Head Constable of the Royal Irish Constabulary is authorized

to act as the representative of Mr. Soames?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR did not reply.

MR. M'CARTAN: May I ask the Chief Secretary whether we are now to understand that it was not correct, as he stated, that Preston went to visit Tracy on behalf of the Government to find who was tampering with him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that to be perfectly and absolutely accurate. I stated that this constable, who was over here on subpœna, did ask Mr. Soames to get leave to visit this prisoner, and I also informed the House that the object with which he visited him was for the purpose I then indicated.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I now ask the right hon. Gentleman if he approves of the Irish Constabulary acting on the initiative of Mr. Soames in visiting these prisoners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR did not answer.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I will put the Question again. Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of Head Constable Preston, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, acting for Mr. Soames in this matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I did not catch whether the hon. and learned Gentleman addressed his Question to me or to the Home Secretary.

MR. T. M. HEALY intimated that he addressed the Question to the Chief Secretary.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will give my answer. I do not think any general rule can be laid down as to what is proper or improper in the matter. [*Ironical cheers.*] I repeat, I do not think any general rule can be laid down as to what is proper or improper in the actions of constables in the matter to which the hon. and learned Member has referred. It depends upon the circumstances of the case. For my own part, I will lay down no other general propositions on the subject than those I have already stated to the House on more than one occasion; but, as a matter of fact, I believe in this case the constable in question was not acting as agent for the *Times*. I stated so yesterday.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who was he acting for then?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: One hon. Gentleman has already referred to the answer which I gave to a similar Question yesterday. That answer was given in precise accordance with the information conveyed to me. I still believe it to be accurate.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the right hon. Gentleman has stated that Constable Preston, in visiting the prisoner on a letter from Mr. Soames, was not acting for Mr. Soames or the *Times*, will he be good enough to state if he was acting for the Government; and will he be good enough to state whether the Government were aware that he was so acting for them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already stated that this constable acted entirely on his own responsibility, and the Government were not cognizant of it. But I may remind the House that the circumstances under which any constable visited Tracy were these: Tracy, when in Ireland, volunteered information of a very serious and a very important character connected with crime in Ireland. He was at that time in one of the local gaols—Sligo, I think——

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Castlebar.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes. He was then denounced in the local Roman Catholic chapel as an informer. Thereupon he was removed to Belfast, and in Belfast also police—I am not sure whether this particular constable, but members of the Police Force—again visited him, with a view of seeing whether he would pursue and complete the confession—complete the statement; and I conceive that the police were unquestionably not only doing their duty, but were doing that which, if they had not done, they would have been guilty of a very grave dereliction of duty. I am informed that when the prisoner was brought over to London on the subpœna of the *Times* he asked to see Head Constable Preston. He either made the request in London or just before he left Belfast; and the Head Constable, I believe, went to the prisoner in consequence of the request of the Treasury—his object being, as I have stated, to elicit, so far as he could, the truth of this matter from the man, and to see what means had been used to tamper with him; and the fact that he got permission to go and see the prisoner through Mr. Soames, who was the instrument through which he had been brought to London as a witness, appears to me to be immaterial.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has made a long statement, but he has not answered. ["Oh, oh!"] I do not complain at all; but what I am going to point out is——

MR. E. STANHOPE: Oh, oh!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!

SIR W. HARCOURT: It is only the Secretary of State for War. What I was going to point out was that the right hon. Gentleman has not answered the Question put to him—namely, Did Constable Preston go into this prison on behalf of the *Times* or on behalf of the Government; and if he did not go on behalf of either, I think we must ask the Home Secretary by what right Irish constables go into English prisons on roving commissions of this kind?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I have answered that point, Sir. I have stated that I believe this Head Constable acted on his own responsibility. It appears to me he acted perfectly rightly. Tracy was already giving very interesting and important information to the Government, and this man was perfectly right to try and follow it out.

MR. SEXTON: In reference to the statement just made that while Tracy was in Castlebar he was publicly denounced in the Roman Catholic Chapel, as he had turned informer, I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been drawn to a letter of the Rev. Patrick Lyons, P.P., of Castlebar, who is Chaplain of the prison, in which he states:—

> "I feel it my imperative duty to give that statement an emphatic and unqualified contradiction. It is utterly and absolutely untrue that Tracy's name was mentioned either directly or indirectly, under any circumstances whatsoever, either in the Prison Chapel or the Parish Church at Castlebar."

I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he now withdraws the statement.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I do not withdraw my statement. I cannot recollect the name of the chapel at this moment, but I know it is not in the parish church to which the hon. Gentleman refers. Of course I am quite open to correction, but so far no reason has been stated in this House by the right hon. Gentleman to induce me to believe I am wrong.

MR. SEXTON rose to put a further Question, but——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I think any further Questions should be put on the paper. The supplementary Questions are becoming very numerous.

MR. SEXTON: As a personal explanation, I wish to state that I quoted from the verbatim report of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman in which Castlebar Church is mentioned.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is any precedent for the course which has been taken with reference to the visit of the agent of the *Times* to Nally in Millbank; and, if so, whether he will give the date, names, and circumstances relating to the last precedent?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have already stated that the course followed was in accordance with the usual and frequent practice. It is quite unnecessary that I should refer to precedents.

MR. COBB: Can the right hon. Gentleman not give one similar case?

MR. MATTHEWS: I can give many; but, inasmuch as the Question appears to throw doubt on my veracity, I decline to do so.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether Delaney, the Invincible convict, was accorded any special privileges; and in virtue of which of the prison rules was it that he was exempt from the compulsion to wear prison dress, and to have his beard and moustache shorn when he appeared to give evidence at the Special Commission?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I have already stated to the House, Delaney was accorded no special privileges whatever. I am informed he was brought over from Ireland in private clothes, in pursuance of the discretion exercised by the General Prisons Board, which was responsible for seeing that the convict was safely produced in Court in compliance with the order of the three Judges.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department upon whose authority or instructions he stated that Mr. Anderson, of the Home Office, would give evidence before the Special Commission; and if Mr. Anderson has been absent from

duty on the 7th of March through illness?

MR. MATTHEWS: Mr. Anderson himself informed me that he was under notice to give evidence before the Royal Commission. He has not been absent through illness.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman stated in his answer previously that Mr. Anderson had been subpœnaed. Upon what authority did he state that Mr. Anderson would be produced? If Mr. Anderson was not absent through illness, why did the Attorney General ask for an adjournment because one of the witnesses was sick?

MR. MATTHEWS: I cannot answer for the conduct of the case by the Attorney General in asking for an adjournment. I fail to see the distinction set up by the hon. Member. If Mr. Anderson is produced he will give evidence.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether District Inspector Newall, of Tralee, has been in attendance at the Commission Court for several months, was only examined on 28th January, and is still here in constant communication with the *Times* solicitor; whether Sergeant Faucett, of Cork, Head Constable Stretton, of Listowel, and Acting Sergeant C. O'Brien, of Tralee, were examined before the Christmas adjournment, but are still here, and in constant communication with Mr. Soames; whether Constable Kenny, Listowel, has been for months attending the Commission in plain clothes, but has never been called, and is in constant communication with Mr. Soames; whether Sergeant Clark, of Tralee, was examined on 13th December and is still here; whether Superintendent Mallon, of Dublin, has been here since the Commission began, or for several months, and has never been called; whether District Inspector Webb, Kilkenny, came over shortly after the Commission opened, and was only examined on 6th March to prove the arrest of Mr. Redmond, being meanwhile in constant communication with Mr. Soames; whether Detective Sergeant Humphreys, of Queenstown, was brought over, kept here for several weeks, never examined, and only allowed to return a few days ago after several consultations with Mr. Soames; whether eight Royal Irish Constabulary men in uniform, ten Royal Irish Constabulary men in plain clothes, five District Inspectors of Royal Irish Constabulary, and four members of Dublin Metropolitan Police in plain clothes are still here without being examined, although the Commission was obliged to adjourn till Tuesday for want of witnesses; whether they or any of them have been in frequent consultation with the *Times* advisers; what are they doing in London if they are not to be called; and why do not police witnesses who have been examined return to their duties in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The necessary inquiry regarding the various officials is being made; but, as several of those referred to have already left London, it is impossible to give full details before Monday. All witnesses return to their duties in Ireland immediately upon being permitted to do so.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I understood from the right hon. Gentleman the other day that there is a Sub-Inspector in London in charge of the policemen over from Ireland; and, after all, it is only a shilling fare from the Home Office to the office of Mr. Soames.

MR. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the *Times* witness Tracy, who was removed some months ago from Belfast Gaol to Millbank, whether he can state on what grounds the Irish Prisons Board refused the application made on his behalf to have an interview with his solicitor without the presence of a warder, though officers of the Constabulary were allowed to visit him alone; whether he is aware that Tracy alleges that County Inspector Melling and District Inspector Gibbons, during their private interview with him at Belfast Gaol, wanted him to swear against the honourable Member for South Mayo and Father O'Malley, P.P., The Neale, county Mayo, in connection with a conspiracy to murder, and that Tracy was then threatened with continued imprisonment when he refused to swear against either of these gentlemen, on the ground that such an oath would be absolutely false; whether Head Constable Preston, on the occasion of his last visit to Tracy at Millbank, further pressed him to consent to swear against these two gentlemen, and promised him

his liberty if he would attend the Special Commission and swear accordingly; whether Tracy, having again refused to swear falsely as required, was told by Preston that he would not be called as a witness; whether these officers of police were the only persons who held communication with Tracy on behalf of the *Times;* and, whether, considering the serious nature of the allegations made by Tracy as to threats and promises of reward held out to him by the police officers who visited him at Belfast, in the event of his refusing or consenting to swear as instructed at the Special Commission, he will grant an independent inquiry into all the circumstances in connection with these visits, and as to the communications made to him by the police at and since his removal from Castlebar Gaol?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The ground for refusing the application was that Tracy had no legal case pending. Under the circumstances there did not appear to be any necessity for an interview. I am not aware that Tracy made any such allegations as are contained in the second paragraph of the Question, and if he has done so they are untrue. The allegations in the third and fourth paragraphs against Preston are also untrue. If by paragraph 5 it is intended to be conveyed that these police officers held communication with Tracy on behalf of the *Times,* I have already stated that they did not do so. As to the last paragraph, I do not see any necessity for granting such an inquiry.

MR. M'CARTAN: If a statement in writing by Tracy of the character indicated is produced, will the right hon. Gentleman grant an inquiry?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, I should be glad to consider that or any other communication, but such a statement would not of itself be adequate ground for an inquiry.

IRELAND—REV. FATHER CLARKE.

MR. WILIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, (1) whether the Reverend Father Clarke, now undergoing sentence in Wexford Gaol has undergone the two terms of punishment on bread and water imposed on him by the governor of the gaol for refusing to take exercise with the ordinary prisoners; and (2), whether it is the fact that a number of prisoners convicted of disgraceful crimes, pickpockets, burglars, and others have been transferred from Dublin to Wexford, and is it intended to require the Reverend Father Clarke to take exercise in the same yard and at the same time with such criminals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As regards the inquiry in the first paragraph, I beg to refer the hon. Member to my reply of yesterday on this subject. I may, however, add that I am informed that one of the terms of punishment was remitted on medical grounds. With respect to the inquiry in paragraph 2, time has not admitted of the receipt of a Report, a local reference being necessary.

LOCAL TAXATION IN COUNTIES.

SIR J. DORINGTON (Gloucester, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is in a position to state when the first instalment from the local taxation account will be paid to counties, and what proportion it is likely to bear to the whole amount payable in the course of the year, and also at what periods similar instalments will be paid, such information being necessary to enable County Councils to arrange their Budgets?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have under consideration the arrangements which it may be practicable to make for the distribution of the licence duties and the proportion of the probate duty payable to local authorities, and I am anxious, so far as possible, to meet the convenience of the authorities in this matter. I am endeavouring to arrange that an instalment shall be paid in July, and a second instalment in October or November, the two together making up an amount not much less than one-half of the sum which it is estimated that the authorities will be entitled to receive in the course of the year.

COAL MINE CERTIFICATES.

CAPTAIN HEATHCOTE (Staffordshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for t he Home Department if he is now able to say whether the additional certificates of fitness now in the possession of the Home Office entitle Isaac Dale, Thomas Oswald,

William Butcher, Thomas Scragg, Joseph Brindley, Caleb Johnson, and James Lloyd to receive Second Class Certificates under section 80 of "The Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Act, 1887?"

MR. MATTHEWS: In the case of Isaac Dale, William Butcher, and Thomas Scragg, certificates of fitness under the Coal Mines Regulation Act will be granted. No certificate can be given in the case of Thomas Oswald, as I find on inquiry that the applicant's previous service did not substantially correspond to that of an under-manager of a mine. The inquiries into the merits of the applications of Joseph Brindley, Caleb Johnson, and James Lloyd are not yet completed.

POSTAGE TO AUSTRALIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he can explain why newspapers four ounces in weight are charged 1½d. to Ceylon, but only 1d. to Sydney, Australia, 5,000 miles further, and although the Australian mail steamers of the Penninsular and Oriental Company call at Ceylon?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, Cambridge University): Ceylon is in the Postal Union, and consequently the postage rates on newspapers for that Colony are governed by the Union regulations. Newspapers sent *viâ* Brindisi to all places in the Union are charged 1½d. for four ounces. The Australian Colonies, on the other hand, are not within the Union, and under an arrangement made with them in 1880, when the Southampton route for mails to Australia was abandoned, it was agreed that the old long sea rate of 1d. should continue to be charged on newspapers for Australia, notwithstanding the fact that they would be forwarded in future by the quicker and more expensive route of Brindisi. I need hardly say that this was a very advantageous arrangement for the Australian Colonies.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that France, which is also in the Postal Union, charges 50 per cent less than England for letters and newspapers to our British Colony of Ceylon. May I ask, too, what excuse the British Postal Authorities give for taking advantage of a clause in the Postal Union for doubling the rates to Ceylon, and whether England cannot withdraw from the Postal Union by giving six months' notice.?

*MR. RAIKES: I must have notice of the Question.

DINIZULU.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has had notice of the fact that an appeal is now pending before the Privy Council upon the question of the validity of the warrant by virtue of which the Zululand officials claim the right to try Cetshwayo's son, Dinuzulu, by the Special Commission now sitting in Zululand; whether the Lord Chancellor, upon the occasion of the Privy Council granting leave for the said appeal, used these words with reference to such notice, viz.: "Anybody who with notice proceeds to try him (Dinizulu) now would be guilty of a very grave dereliction of duty;" and whether he has reason to fear that this warning will be disregarded?

BARON H. DE WORMS: No appeal is actually pending; but leave to appeal has been granted. The jurisdiction of the Special Commission to try Dinizulu does not depend upon the validity of the warrant for his removal from Natal. I am informed that the Lord Chancellor did use the words in question; but he was under the impression that if the trial proceeded and sentence of death were passed, Dinizulu might be executed before the appeal could be heard. This, however, is not the case, as distinct instructions have been long ago sent to the Governor that no sentence passed on any of the accused chiefs is to be carried out until the proceedings have been reviewed by the Secretary of State. I may also add that the Governor reported to the Secretary of State that further postponement of the trial was most undesirable and possibly dangerous; and that delay had already caused apprehension, and created a bad impression on the well-disposed. In these circumstances the Secretary of State considered it proper that the trial should proceed.

THE MURDER OF DISTRICT INSPECTOR MARTIN.

SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the Chief

Secretary for Ireland whether it is the case that the peasantry of Donegal during the past three weeks have been pursued by constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary with loaded firearms?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I suppose the hon. Member refers to the persons accused of being concerned in the murder of District Inspector Martin. In reply, I have to say that they have been pursued.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order with reference to the business of this evening. In the Orders of the Day circulated among hon. Members no effective Supply is set down, and no notice is given of any particular class of Estimates to be gone on with. Hon. Members have made their arrangements accordingly. On the paper which we got on coming down to the House I find that effective Supply is set down, and the point of order I wish to put is whether we are to be guided by the paper distributed this morning, which may or may not be in accordance with the Notices given last night, or by the amended paper distributed this afternoon?

MR. JACKSON: I am very sorry that a mistake has occurred in reference to the notice paper circulated among Members. It was an entirely accidental omission, and was discovered too late to stop the circulation of the paper. The mistake was corrected in the white paper laid on the Table of the House. There was no fault on the part of anybody, the mistake being entirely accidental.

*DR. CAMERON: But the point is rather an important one. If there has been a mistake on the part of the hon. Gentleman or of the clerks in noting the procedure of the House, and if there has afterwards been an informal interpolation in a second edition of the notice paper, I take it that that will not constitute a valid expression of the Orders of the House, and I ask for the Speaker's ruling on the point.

*MR. SPEAKER: A mistake has evidently been made, but I am bound to say that under the circumstances the notice of effective Supply is insufficient.

HER MAJESTY'S SHIP "SULTAN."

LORD C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Government can give the House any information as to the abandonment of the *Sultan*?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I will read to the House the telegrams which I have received on this subject. Yesterday afternoon I received from the Commander-in-Chief at Malta a telegram to the following effect:—

"*Sultan* on shore, Comino Channel. I have been on board. Ship has made some water. In my opinion she can be safely got off by lightening. I am proceeding with *Alexandra* and other ships this evening."

Late in the evening I received a further telegram stating—

"Damage to *Sultan* greater than I anticipated. Fear there is little hope of saving the ship."

The last telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, which was despatched this morning, is as follows:—

"Thursday night.—Have reduced water in *Sultan* by employing German salvage ship *Berger Wilhelm*. There may still be a possibility of saving her when further appliances preparing are used to-morrow morning. I remain directing proceedings."

The Commander-in-Chief has been directed to report whether any assistance can be sent from England. We have not yet received his reply. I may say that the last telegram from the Commander-in-Chief is confirmed by a subsequent telegram through Reuter's agency. It is dated March 8th, 11.40 a.m., and says:—

"The position of the *Sultan* remains unchanged, and she is now full of water. The salvage steamer *Berger Wilhelm* is alongside, working her centrifugal pumps, and gaining slightly on the water. The other vessels of the Mediterranean Squadron, under the command of the Duke of Edinburgh, are doing their utmost to render assistance, and the prospect of saving the *Sultan* is now better than it was yesterday. The accident occurred during torpedo practice."

THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF THE NAVY.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, South): After the statements made last night on the subject of the Navy by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Chan-

cellor of the Exchequer, I asked the noble Lord whether he would lay on the Table certain information. The first thing I asked for was a statement as to the waste of ships in the Fleet; the second was a statement as to the effect of what was known as Lord Northbrook's scheme since it was adopted; and the third was a statement in print of the figures contained in the noble Lord's speech. Will the noble Lord give the House that information?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I have directed the first two statements mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman to be prepared, and I will circulate the third statement for which the right hon. Gentleman asks in the course of 24 hours.

MOTIONS.

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SUPPLY—MORNING SITTINGS.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand Westminster), in rising to move, "That until Easter whenever the Committee of Supply is appointed for Tuesday or Thursday the House shall meet at 2 of the clock. At such Morning Sittings the Committee of Supply shall be the principal business, and the provisions of Standing Order 56 shall be extended to Tuesday. The Motion appointing the next Sitting of the Committee of Supply may be taken at any hour, though opposed," said: During the past 20 years the difficulties which have been experienced by the House itself in regard to the discussion of the Estimates have been considerable. I remember, in previous years, to have taken part in the objections urged in the House against the practice of asking for repeated Votes on Account, and have myself deplored the delay connected with the business of Committee of Supply in many Sessions of Parliament. I believe that every Government, without exception, has been most anxious to take steps to remedy that acknowledged evil, and make a serious attempt to grapple with it. Various Select Committees have from time to time been appointed to consider whether better arrangements cannot be made for that purpose. A strong Committee in 1885 gave the question a great amount of consideration; but they were unable to arrive at a conclusion which offered any hope of affording the relief desired in regard to the despatch of public business. Last Session, again, a Committee, of which the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) was Chairman, very seriously considered the question. It has been suggested that a Standing Committee might be appointed to deal with the questions involved in the voting of Supply; but no conclusion has been adopted which will be sufficient to justify the House in making any very considerable departure from the present form of procedure in Committee of Supply. I think that anyone who looks back to our past experience must feel that many of the discussions in Committee of Supply have not been of a businesslike or satisfactory character, and that it is very desirable, if possible, that questions involved in Votes of Supply should be considered by an authoritative body, which will aid the House and the Government in arriving at a satisfactory result. But no such suggestion has been made in any form that gives the slightest hope that it is likely to be accepted by the House, and, therefore, the Government are forced to fall back on the existing system, with such modifications as are found to be practicable. Under the present practice the pressure of public business has driven the voting of Supply to a late period of the Session, and the very prolonged discussions on certain Votes has led to other Votes having afterwards to be passed with a slight amount of consideration. Now, if it should be decided that the Government must appropriate the ordinary Government days, Mondays and Thursdays, to Committee of Supply, it will result in this—that, taking yesterday, the 7th of March, as the first day of Committee of Supply this Session, every Monday and Thursday up to the end of July will be absorbed by Committee of Supply. That is assuming the business of Supply to occupy as much of our time as it did in the Sessions of 1887 and 1888. I wish to show that some change is absolutely necessary if the House is to give proper consideration to the business of Supply. I do not doubt that hon. Members themselves may effect a considerable change in our progress with the Votes if they slightly condense their speeches in Committee of Supply and proportion their observations to the im-

portance of the items discussed. I remember that in former years both sides of the House approached Supply in a perfect impartial spirit, with a desire to assist the progress of business, and with much less of that kind of discussion which tends to delay it. But I do not wish to say anything to protract this discussion. I am only anxious to invite the attention of the House to a most grave and important question, and to recommend it to accept the proposal of the Government, by which I hope we shall be better able to get through the business of the country, and to abate what has amounted to something like a public scandal. In proposing that Supply should be taken at the Morning Sittings of Tuesday and Thursday, I fully recognize that it must be reserved to the House, to the Government, and to the Opposition itself to require a different appropriation of the time of the House for special reasons; but I trust that, if the Resolution is passed, we shall at least endeavour to make the best use of the time so appropriated for the purpose of making progress with Supply, and so rendering Votes on Account less necessary than they have been in the past. It is not necessary to discuss the matter historically, and therefore, I will only say that I prefer to begin the Session this way rather than at a later period to have to make appeals for concessions, which then take the character of a much more complete absorption of the time of private Members than I now desired to make. The absorption of the whole time of the House by the Government has been necessary in the public interest, but it is an exceedingly unsatisfactory condition of things, and it is one which I hope may be avoided by the assistance of Members on both sides of the House. If we can only find a method of dealing with the problem before us in a business-like manner—in something like the manner in which other great Assemblies transact theirs, I think we may accomplish even better results with a saving of time. I beg to move the Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That until Easter, whenever the Committee of Supply is appointed for Tuesday or Thursday, the House shall meet at Two of the clock. At such Morning Sittings the Committee of Supply shall be the principal Business, and the provisions of Standing Order 56 shall be extended to Tuesday. The Motion appointing the next Sitting of the Committee of Supply may be taken at any hour, though opposed."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I am very sorry the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian is not able to be present to-day, but I am sufficiently acquainted with the views of the right hon. Gentleman to be able to answer the Leader of the House. I will not dispute that the condition of business in the House is unsatisfactory, and that it has been so for a long time; but I am afraid that the Opposition and the Government will not agree as to the causes of that unsatisfactory condition; and the remedy I would recommend would be very much wider and broader than Motions of this kind. We have been promised over and over again that the House of Commons shall have plenty of time to deal with all the subjects it desires to discuss, because in a certain portion of the United Kingdom the success of the Government's administration has been such that there is really no question of difficulty there. If that were so we need not anticipate any discussions upon that subject; but I am not so sanguine, and I am afraid that there are difficulties that will still lead to a good deal of discussion. It is true that proposals were made in former times for dealing with the Estimates. In 1886 there was a Committee on the subject, presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, and the Government then made proposals for dealing with the Estimates, but they were rejected by the friends of the right hon. Gentleman, and mainly through the opposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. No doubt the Estimates occupied more time last year than in former years, but the obvious reason was that the Government took the whole time of the House. The consequence has been that the utmost ingenuity has been employed to find in Committee of Supply opportunities for discussion which cannot be had in any other way. It is for the same reason that the Debate on the Address has become, of late years, so protracted. The Government is now asking for a limited sacrifice of the time of private Members. I understand the present Motion only asks for the time of the House till Easter, and, of course,

it is on that footing, and on that footing alone, that we have to deal with this proposal. I quite admit the great difficulty in which the Government are placed at this moment is partly owing to the late commencement of the Session, with reference to Votes in Supply which must be obtained before a certain date. To the limited demand made for the purpose of enabling legal conditions to be fulfilled I have no opposition to offer; and I am glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that the enforcement of the Resolution must be subject to the condition of allowing time for the discussion of questions that may be raised by the Opposition. For I contemplate that we shall have grave matters to bring before the House, and I desire that they shall be submitted to the House at the earliest possible moment. On the Vote on Account we shall desire to challenge the conduct of the Executive Government in this country and in Ireland. There are questions to be raised with regard to the conduct of the principal Law Officer of the Crown and with regard to Irish magistrates and constables; and these are matters which might be properly discussed on the Vote on Account. There is also another matter, which it would be premature to refer to, but upon which it will be our duty to ask for the opinion of the House. I will be no party to limiting the liberties of private Members, but I will not oppose the facilities asked for by the Government in the special circumstances, and under the necessary conditions which have been recognized by the Leader of the House.

*Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I certainly did not expect that we should have any assistance from the Front Bench below me in resisting this demand of the Government; the Front Benches invariably agree in the attempt to absorb the time of private Members. I do not believe there is anyone in the House but is anxious that the discussions in Supply should be more frequent and more efficient than they have been in the past, but I do not believe the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman will tend to that result. There are two strong objections to it; in the first place it is an unwarranted infringement of the rights of private Members; and, secondly, it will cause an undue prolongation of the Sittings of the House without adequate reason shown for it. The right hon. Gentleman says let us meet at 2 o'clock, but he forgot to remind us that when we do so we sit until 1 o'clock the next morning. In regard to private Members, I am bound to say that I may be somewhat partial in this matter, because I have for the first time after four or five years of membership had the satisfaction of drawing the first place for the coming Tuesday, and now the Government propose to take away my ewe lamb. I naturally resent it. But the right hon. Gentleman tells us that we may have our discussions in the evening, but every Member knows perfectly well that unless the matter is one combining Radicalism with amusement, such, for instance, as the reform of the House of Lords, it is impossible for a private Member to make or keep a House after five hours' work and the two hours' interval, and practically it comes to this, that the Government secure five hours for official work, the House is counted at 9 o'clock, and you, Sir, have an opportunity of going to bed at a reasonable time. I must say, if the Government are to make a proposal in reference to Tuesdays, it would be much better for them to be bold, and to say the exigencies of the time require us to take the whole day. As it is, they only get five hours, and the rest of the time is almost certain to be wasted. I would much rather see them get a good night of the ordinary hours for Supply than see this time wasted. It is perfectly true that one reason why there is so much time absorbed in Motions on the Estimates, on adjournments and discussions in Supply, is that the Government are always intruding on the rights of private Members. If private Members cannot get these rights in meal they will have them in malt. I do not believe this appropriation of Tuesdays will save any of the time of the House, because Members who find themselves counted out will take care to raise questions in which they are interested on the Estimates or in some other way. The right hon. Gentleman says he only asks this now in order to save the absorption of time of private Members later on in the Session. I never yet heard a Government make this proposal, without saying that they do it to

safeguard future rights; and after Easter we shall find the Government ready with another proposal to absorb more of our rights. So much in regard to Tuesday. But I do want to ask what in the world is the reason for making this proposal in reference to Thursdays? It simply comes to this—that instead of sitting from 3 to 12 we shall sit from 2 to 7, and from 9 to 1. Why, we all know perfectly well, and I should have thought the right hon. Gentleman would know, that the best time to get through business, especially Supply, is just those two hours about dinner-time. We shall have, instead of nine consecutive hours, a division into five hours and four hours—the first period taken up by the front benches, and a great part of the second. What possible gain can be expected I cannot see. The number of hours will be exactly the same, and hon. Members will be inconvenienced by having the hour in the morning and the hour after 12 o'clock added, or one hour at each end, the Government losing two hours, and those the two best hours, in the middle. I protest most emphatically against the proposal—not that we do not desire that Supply should be adequately discussed, but we object at this early period—the third week of the Session—to private Members' rights being ruthlessly invaded; and the proposal as to Thursday is one of the most extraordinary with reference to business that any Government—even a Conservative Government — ever made to the House.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries): I will not prolong the debate beyond a few words. Certainly I am somewhat disappointed that my right hon. Friend (Sir W. Harcourt) has taken the course he has taken; for, although I have every confidence in him upon other matters, I have not on this subject—the protection of the rights of private Members. Now, what is the situation? At the very beginning of the Session, and with no special circumstances to justify them, the Government take away a considerable portion of private Members' time down to Easter; and if they do it now, I do not see why they should not do it at the commencement of every Session. There are important questions which hon. Members desire to raise; for example, the hon. Member for West Nottingham has a Motion in reference to the condition of the poor in our great cities. Last year his opportunity was taken away in this manner, and now it is to be taken away again, merely to enable the Government easily and leisurely to get through Supply. Many projects have at different times been submitted to the House, any one of which the Government might have adopted instead of thus taking away private Members' rights. These encroachments are continually going on. From 1880 to 1885 there were few; in 1886 and 1887 they increased; and in 1888 the time of private Members was almost entirely taken away; and now, at an earlier stage than ever, the process is continued, against all the traditions of the House. It has always been customary to allow Members facilities for bringing on matters of public interest, and, public attention being thus directed, they frequently afterwards become the subject of important measures.

*MR. SPEAKER: The form in which the hon. Member has put down his Amendment cannot appear on the Journals of the House, as it is not, as it stands, an independent proposition. Perhaps it will suit the hon. Member's purpose to meet the right hon. Gentleman's proposal with a negative.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I will do that, Sir.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I have a good deal of sympathy with Members against whom there seems to be a conspiracy of the two front benches. I confess I am not surprised in the least at the course taken by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt). He is always extremely liberal, and in this case he does not mind how much of private Members' time is taken up, provided he gets the opportunity of ventilating any grievance against the Government whenever he pleases. That is an attitude I am not surprised at. But I submit there is another side to this question. Undoubtedly it is desirable that we should get on better with Supply than we have done in recent Sessions. Undoubtedly, in these days it does take a great deal longer for any Government to get Supply than it did some years ago, when first I had the honour of a seat in this House, and this is mainly owing to the increase and development of the talking powers of hon. Members.

Now we are told that to fulfil the conditions of the law these days must be appropriated by the Government, and if it is absolutely necessary we must consent to it; but it appears to me the conditions of the law would be fulfilled if, instead of taking the Tuesdays up to Easter, the Government took them up to March 31. This suggestion I submit for consideration. I have always protested against this absorption of private Members' rights, and I confess I am the more inclined to to do so now, having in view a subject in which I take great interest—interest that I know is shared on both sides of the House; and certainly I shall take what steps I can to secure a day for its discussion before the end of the Session. I hope the suggestion I have made to limit the Motion to March 31 will find favour; but, whether or no, the passing of this Motion must not be taken as a precedent to be followed up with another immediately after Easter. My experience is that a Motion made thus early is very likely to be soon renewed.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): There are strong reasons why we should not consent to this proposal. It will be in the recollection of the House that on Wednesday afternoon a special appeal was made to the Leader of the House in reference to a Motion standing in the name of the hon. Member for West Nottingham, raising a very important question, which we hoped to have fully and properly discussed. That Motion stands for the 26th; but a week earlier there is a Motion in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), in which many Members on both sides take the deepest interest. During the whole of last Session my hon. Friend was unfortunate in the ballot; but, having been more fortunate this Session, I sincerely hope his opportunity will not be taken away. From the shake of the right hon. Gentleman's head I suppose I may infer that he means that it will not be taken away, because there will be opportunity for discussion at the Evening Sitting; but I submit the time at our disposal in the evening would not be sufficient to deal with a question of such vital importance, for I know there is a desire among many Members on both sides to take part in the discussion. I certainly could not give a silent vote on this occasion, and I make an appeal at least to except the 19th and 26th from this Motion, that we may have the opportunity of discussing Motions that are of vital interest to the industrial classes of the country.

*SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I can quite understand the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) when he says he will have ample opportunity of discussing the difficult and delicate questions he is prepared to bring before the House, and that is a statement which of course the First Lord will take notice of, because it means that we shall be considerably delayed with the Estimates, even with the time the Government now propose to take. The Committee of Public Accounts are considering whether the number of Civil Service Votes can be reduced; but there is another point that deserves serious consideration, and that is whether, in this branch of the Estimates, Votes might be taken and used precisely in the same way as they are used in the Navy and Army Estimates. If that were done, I venture to say it would prevent a large waste of the time of the House. I merely mention it as a subject deserving serious consideration. Now, we were kept here until Christmas last year. Do you want to be kept here until Christmas again? I venture to say we ought to do everything in our power to prevent an Autumn Session, and it is only by working steadily at the Estimates that we can prevent that. We all know what a melancholy failure that Autumn Session was, and I hope we shall not be placed in such a position again. Therefore it is that while disliking, as I do, taking away the time of private Members, I shall support the proposal. It must be remembered that at least private Members will have as much time as the Government up to Easter, half Tuesdays and all Wednesdays and Fridays. But I would, however, make an appeal to my right hon. Friend in respect to Thursdays. I cannot for the life of me see what object is to be gained by the proposal. Let us have Supply on Thursday and proceed consecutively through the day. I am not at all sure that even the Government, without great pressure, will be able to keep a House at 9 o'clock. I am sure it would be more in the interest of business to leave Thursday as it is.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I support resistance to this combination of the front benches to take away the time of private Members. Year by year this encroachment increases under Liberal and Conservative Governments alike. But our grievances must be discussed, if not in the old way on the Motion for going into Supply, then upon special Votes as they arise, so progress is not actually accelerated. The hope that our time after Easter will not be taken is utterly groundless. It is a completely hollow promise for the right hon. Gentleman to hold out any hope that the Government will be more tender with our time then than now. Let me point to one consideration in reference to this meeting at 2 o'clock on two days of the week. It is putting an unnecessary and unfair strain upon a large number of Members who attend Committees upstairs. They cannot attend to their duties there commencing at noon, and then take that interest in the proceedings here as they are supposed to do until 1 o'clock the next morning. It is unprecedented for the Government to make this demand at this period of the Session. When the right hon. Gentleman asks us to work as other great Assemblies do, he asks us to do an impossible task. No other Assembly attempts to do the work we attempt, attending to the interest of an Empire of untold millions, and actively superintending the government of every parish, county, and nationality in the United Kingdom. You are asking us to perform an impossible task. Various Governments have tried to change our Rules of Procedure, but it becomes more apparent Session by Session that this House has completely broken down under the strain put upon it, and that you never will be able, by any changes in procedure, to keep abreast of the work to be done. The only remedy is that hinted at by the right hon. Gentleman last Session, that, instead of putting increased work on one Assembly, you should delegate to local Assemblies in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, work that can be more effectually done by them. I hope opposition to this Motion will be pressed to Division.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square): I can assure the House this proposal is made with every desire to meet the views of hon. Members. Supply is in one sense Government business, but in another sense it affords to Members the opportunity of criticizing the conduct of the Executive Government, and the performance of a certain portion of those functions for which the right hon. Gentleman opposite is so anxious to retain full time to private Members. But I am bound to say it appears to me that a larger number of private Members have far more opportunities of taking part in criticism of the Executive on the days of Supply than on those particular days when a private Member brings forward a Motion, and when he does not, perhaps, secure a very large attendance. I can assure hon. Members that the Government have a harder time when Supply is before the House than when a private Member's Motion is under consideration. If we consulted merely our own convenience, we should rejoice at the Motions on Tuesday, inasmuch as most of the Ministers can then take a holiday, instead of having to be present in the House prepared as we ought to be, and as I hope we are, to meet the criticisms that may be passed upon our conduct. The hon. Member opposite says no Assembly in the world has such a mighty task, and I entirely agree with him, but no Assembly devotes anything like the proportion of time we do to the minutest criticism of the minutest details in the Estimates. I have often wondered, when I have heard two Members discussing as they did last year over so small an item as £10 paid for a park-keeper's ammunition, if they consider that there may be others who desire to discuss colonial and other large matters of administration. A small number of Members carry their criticism to such a minute point that they prevent time being given to larger and more general questions of policy which certainly ought to engage the atttention of the House. I can assure the House that in proposing to take Morning Sittings on Tuesday and Thursday, it is with the idea that we should allow some reciprocity to Members for the time taken from Tuesday. We do not seek to take the time from them without an assurance that a portion of the time shall be given to Supply. I judge that I am not

mistaken in the belief that the right hon. Gentleman opposite considers it a reciprocal concession on our part. It was made with that view, and we have reason to believe it was so estimated by some Members for whose judgment we have considerable regard. What I would suggest to the House is, that they should, at least, allow us to take this on trial and see how it works. We are only anxious to get on with Supply. Hon. Members will admit that Supply is to a great extent private Members' time, for not only do we vote the money, but we ventilate grievances—and grievances are freely brought forward in relation to many subjects for which Supply affords ample opportunity. Therefore, we really thought we were not trenching much on the rights of Members in making the suggestion. We ask you at least to give it a trial until Easter; and if it does not work smoothly, if hon. Members do not get their opportunity, it will be open to us to reconsider the matter. We do not wish to force our view with any degree of obstinacy or persistency, but there is a desire that Supply should be brought on early, and full opportunity will be given for financial criticism, as well as for the ventilation of grievances that arise in connection with administration.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The right hon. Gentleman said he was willing to make a sacrifice in conceding an alteration as regards Tuesday.

MR. GOSCHEN: As regards Thursday.

MR. LABOUCHERE: As regards Tuesday, I think the right hon. Gentleman used the word "sacrifice." I can assure him we do not want him to make that sacrifice, and that we prefer to remain as we are as regards Tuesday. The right hon. Gentleman says he makes the sacrifice to us as a sort of *quid pro quo*, but are we sure that he will put down the Estimates on Thursdays as well as Tuesdays? What is to prevent him on a Thursday going on with the Estimates for a certain number of hours, and then going on with other business? I really believe the majority on both sides of the House would infinitely prefer to meet at 3 o'clock and adjourn at 12 o'clock, than to meet at 2 and adjourn from 7 till 9 o'clock and then sit until 1 o'clock. I do hope we shall have some sort of assurance from the right hon. Gentleman that he will not press this matter as regards Thursday. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) came forward as a private Member, and said he had sympathy with us. It is an exceedingly barren sympathy. He is going to vote against us, this sympathetic friend. He says that this will not be established as a precedent for the taking of all Tuesdays, because it appears that the right hon. Gentleman wants it after Easter, to treat us to an essay on bi-metallism. I can tell the right hon. Gentleman that if you give an inch to a Minister he will take an ell. We will not get back the Tuesdays after Easter, and they will take our Fridays. It is an additional reason with me for voting against the Resolution that I might lose the chance of hearing the most interesting essay on bi-metallism. I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the Members of both front benches need to be thoroughly instructed in these matters. A man, once he becomes a Minister, loses half his virtue. The reason private Members have been crushed like worms is because hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House will not turn. There are two notes upon this question—the official and the non-official or private Members below the Gangway on either side of the House. Private Members have always stood together — irrespective of Party — in protection of their rights; but the reason why we cannot get those rights now is that hon. Gentlemen on those benches are too servile to their Leaders. It is notorious that no reforms whatever would have been brought forward had it not been for private Members, who bring forward their measures or resolutions, probably getting small divisions at first, but gradually increasing them until the Ministry, from considerations of Party support in the House and country, are at length compelled to deal with the questions so brought into public view for settlement. It is absolutely essential for the well-being of this country, and for the progress of any species of reform, that you should have private Members' nights. We have been told that the Estimates must be pressed forward at this time of the Session, otherwise we shall have to sit until Christmas. Irrespective of the Estimates, there will

be a good deal to discuss, and which we will insist upon discussing. But surely there is no necessity for taking private Members' nights after we have only been sitting for fourteen days, unless it is the fear of sitting until Christmas. I cannot see anything in the gracious Speech of Her Majesty to show that the Government have any important business to lay before this House. We are going to have an increase of the Navy, which will of course be approved on this side of the House. We are going to have a Scotch Local Government Bill, in respect of which, knowing nothing about Scotch business, I shall vote with the majority of Scotch Members, who ought to know pretty well what they want. I do hope the First Lord of the Treasury will reconsider this proposal, or if not—for I know that he has the majority at his back—that he will reconsider it with regard to Thursday.

*MR. DE LISLE (Mid Leicestershire): I hope the House will pardon my supporting the Motion, for, in doing so, I shall be imposing on myself a Lenten penance, which, like other Lenten penances, may not lead to an amendment of life. I agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite that Morning Sittings do not add much to our work, and at the Evening Sittings it is often impossible to keep a House for the discussion of questions in which we are interested. I hope this is the last time a Motion of this kind will be proposed. I hope the House will give a kind consideration to the proposal which I had on the Paper last Session, for it meets nearly all the objections which have been urged on both sides of the House. It has been said by the First Lord of the Treasury that discussions in Committee of Supply are generally not of a profitable kind. Now my proposal is that thirty days of the Session should be set apart for the discussion of the Estimates, dividing the total into 10 parts, and allowing for the discussion of each class of the Estimates three days. When these three days had elapsed, then the Closure would, by automatic action, be applied at midnight. Thirty days are in excess of the average number, the figures given by the First Lord of the Treasury showing that the number of days devoted to Supply for the last 20 years average 26 days, although last year 42 days were devoted to Supply. In classes of the Civil Service which are sub-divided into English, Scotch, and Irish Estimates the Government, by taking English Estimates the first day, Scotch the second, and Irish the third day, would be able to reduce the discussion of Irish affairs to just and well-proportioned limits, and if necessary to insure adequate and fair discussion. Spokesmen might be selected on both sides, who should devote their energies to the subjects which they had mastered. I hope the House will give this proposal their careful consideration. As a loyal supporter of the Government, I am bound, though not without regret, to vote for the Motion of the First Lord of the Treasury.

SIR W. FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): The hon. Member who has just sat down says he will vote for the Motion as a matter of penance; but I must join with hon. Members in protesting against this interference with private Members' rights. Our experience of Evening Sittings last Session was by no means satisfactory, for the House counted out on several occasions. Now, when there are several questions affecting the industrial classes to be discussed, I emphatically object to a return to a system that has worked badly. I think it is time private Members should protest against these reciprocal concessions being made at their expense. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman is to restore the custom of last Session with regard to Tuesdays, and which did not work well, and further it seeks to apply that which worked badly to another day of the week. I do not see the advantage of it. It is a great inconvenience to hon. Members to be brought down to the House at two o'clock, only to adjourn at seven and meeting again at nine—a course which gives you exactly the same number of working hours, only with this disadvantage, that an interval like that from seven to nine retards the work. therefore, I holding as I do, that the use of Thursday as a day for Morning Sittings would interfere with the business of the House, I move that the words "or Thursday" be omitted.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to second the Amendment, and would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to give due consideration to the

general feeling of this House on the subject. I am quite ready to come here at two o'clock, but I have a strong objection to stay here till one o'clock in the morning, especially when two hours in the middle of the time are rendered absolutely useless.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "or Thursday."—(*Sir Walter Foster.*)

SIR W. HARCOURT: There seems to be a strong feeling in the House as to the inconvenience of the arrangement as to Thursday, and I would suggest that the Government might avoid the inconvenience of a Morning Sitting on that day if they would allow the House to meet at the usual hour on the understanding that after a certain amount of time has been given to Supply, progress shall be reported and the legislative business proceeded with. The Government can hardly expect to get through all the legislative business on the Monday, and must, therefore, have some portion of another day on which legislative measures can be considered.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: If it be the pleasure of the House to sit at three o'clock on Thursdays instead of two, I shall not object so long as the House is agreeable to carry out the spirit of the proposal I have submitted, and give an amount of time to Supply equal to that which we shall obtain on Tuesdays. In that case I will endeavour to carry out the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, and not insist on the part of the Resolution which relates to Thursday.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I object entirely to the proposal of the Government, who are anxious to put further obstacles in the way of the discussion of Irish business. I think there never was a time when the Government were less entitled to take the time of private Members. I can assure my Friends below the Gangway who have spoken with sorrow of the opportunities that will be lost to them in regard to the consideration of matters in which they are interested, that it is not English matters of which the Government are thinking; the object of this proposal is entirely to extinguish Irish discussions. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite laugh, and I quite agree with the suggestion that laughter conveys—namely, that Her Majesty's Government will not succeed in preventing the discussion of Irish matters. We have in Ireland a most stringent Coercion Act—the operation of which is producing daily acts of cruelty and injustice—and the Irish people, in view of this, have a right to have their affairs discussed in this House. The more the Government coerce in Ireland, the more strenuously will they endeavour to apply the Closure with regard to Irish discussions in this House; the Closure with them being the complement of Coercion.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If the Government will only frankly state that no business will be taken at the Tuesday Morning Sittings except Supply, and that no other business of a contentious character will be taken, I think the House will be satisfied. I should like to know what the Government mean by "the principal business?" Do they mean that no business shall be taken on Tuesday mornings except Supply and purely formal business, and that they will not bring on contentious matters?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: While thanking the Government for the concession they have made, I am fully of opinion that it does not meet our objections to their proposals, and therefore I shall feel bound to divide the House on the Question.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think we ought to have some clear understanding as to what is to be "the principal business;" and that the Resolution is not to be used except for the most formal business beyond Supply.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It might be necessary to take the Report of Committee of Supply, or a stage of the Consolidated Fund Bill.

Question, "That the words 'or Thursday' stand part of the Question," put, and negatived.

Main Question, as amended, put:—The House divided; Ayes 255; Noes 132.—(Division List, No. 11.)

Resolved, That until Easter, whenever the Committee of Supply is appointed for Tuesday, the House shall meet at 2 of the clock. At such Morning Sittings the Committee of Supply shall be the principal Business, and the provisions of Standing Order 56 shall be

extended to Tuesday. The Motion appointing the next Sitting of the Committee of Supply may be taken at any hour, though opposed.

PARTNERSHIP BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Hill, Bill to consolidate the Law of Partnerships, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Hill, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Sir George Elliot, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Whitley, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Seale-Hayne.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 151.]

POOR RELIEF (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tuite, Bill to amend and extend the Acts relating to Poor Relief in Ireland, in order to enable Boards of Guardians to provide Industrial Training for Pauper Children, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tuite, M'Cartan, Mr. P. J. Power, Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Patrick Joseph O'Brien, and Dr. Fox.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 152.]

SMALL DEBTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Caldwell, Bill to extend and amend the Law relating to the recovery of Small Debts in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Caldwell, Mr. W. P. Sinclair, Mr. Thorburn, and Mr. Provand.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 153.]

SHERIFF COURTS CONSOLIDATION CIVIL CODE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Caldwell, Bill to combine in one Code the regulations affecting Sheriff Courts in Scotland, and to extend and amend the Law of civil process therein, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Caldwell, Sir George Trevelyan, and Mr. Philipps.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 154.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PARLIAMENTIARY ELECTIONS (MR. BRADLAUGH)—MOTION TO EXPUNGE FROM THE JOURNALS OF THE HOUSE RESOLUTION OF THE 22ND JUNE, 1880.

*MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): The Amendment which now stands in my name, and which I now beg to move, is—

"That the Resolution of this House of the 22nd day of June, 1880, 'That having regard to the Reports and Proceedings of Two Select Committees appointed by this House, Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to take the oath or make the affirmation mentioned in the Statute 29 Vic. c. 19, and the 31 & 32 Vic. c. 72,' be expunged from the Journals of this House, as being subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors of this Kingdom."

Now, this Resolution which I ask the House to assent to will be found in the Commons' Journal, vol. 135, page 934. In asking the House to give its assent to the Motion, I trust I may be allowed to express a hope that the Government will not feel it its duty to oppose it. The Resolution itself is not without precedent. There are, indeed, several precedents upon the Journals of the House, but I shall only trouble the House with five of them, and those very briefly. Two of them are exactly applicable to the state of things I am about to submit to the House this evening. The one most in point is the Resolution which stands in the Commons' Journal, vol. 38, page 937, of the 3rd of May, 1782, and is as follows:—

"That the entry in the Journals of the House on the 17th of February, 1769, of a Resolution that John Wilkes, having been in this Session expelled the House, was and is incapable of being elected a Member of the present Parliament, be expunged from the Journals of this House, as being subversive of the rights of the electors of this Kingdom."

That, however, was not the first Resolution of this character. In vol. 4 of the Commons' Journal, page 397, there is this entry:—

"The House took into consideration the Votes and Orders of this House for disabling Mr. Henry Martyn to sit as a Member of Parliament."

After some discussion, it was resolved—

"That this Resolution be annulled and made void and erased out of the book, and that the Clerk do vacate the same accordingly."

There are several other Resolutions which, by subsequent Resolutions, have been expunged from the Journals of the House. One will be found in 5 Commons Journals, page 197, but it is impossible now to discover its application, the page being blank, the Resolution having been actually expunged, and no trace of it left. Then there is in the 11th Commons Journals, page 210, an entry of a payment made to Sir Thomas Clarges which is directed to be struck out; and, curiously enough, there are two other entries on the same page which are also directed to be ex-

punged, and which related to the Rev. Dr. Nowel and Mr. Lenthall for words spoken. So that what I am asking the House to do to-night, if I make out a good case, is only a matter which has been done more than once. I do not propose, in what I have to say, to re-awaken any of the bitterness which might be found in portions of the struggle which commenced with this Resolution. My desire is rather to induce the House, in the interests of my constituents specially, and in the interests, I think I have a right to say, of the electors generally, to erase the Resolution from the Records of the House, the struggle in this matter having practically ended by the passing into law last year of the Oaths Act. I do not propose to make any other statement of facts than that which is found in Sir Erskine May's admirable summary, and the only references I shall make are to the Journals and the Report of the Select Committee, to which I must refer in order to make myself clear. I shall abstain from referring in any way to *Hansard*, because it would be impossible for me to do so without remembering things which Members on the other side of the House have shown a wise disposition to forget, and which I have no desire to recall. There is only one exception which I shall make to that, and the House will see the reason why I make it. In the Journals of the House of Commons it will be seen by reference to vol. 135, page 123, that it is recorded that I did not come to the House until the 3rd of May, 1880, to make my claim to affirm, while the Journals show that Parliament opened on the 29th of April, several days earlier. I think it is absolutely necessary, both for my own honour and in order to explain what is otherwise not clear, that I should state why it was that I delayed coming to the Table. What I am now stating has reference to the late Speaker of the House of Commons, of whom I desire to speak with the most profound respect, and for whose personal courtesy towards myself, during the difficult struggle to which I am referring, no words of recognition on my part can be too high. I have no desire to speak of him except as a Judge holding a high position in which I am sure that in every respect he tried to do what he thought to be right and just in reference to the honour of this House and the rights of individual Members. Of course it is necessary that I should challenge the decision of the late Speaker upon one point, although I admit that the House itself acted with him. It must be remembered that I am speaking now of the opposition which I received some years after it happened, but I received full permission at that time from Mr. Speaker Brand to state at any time, seeing that the matter had been alluded to by Sir Stafford Northcote in a speech to the House, that I delayed coming to the Table after having communicated informally to Mr. Speaker and to the Clerk, subsequent to my election, my intention to claim to affirm, as I then thought I had a right to do, in consequence of Mr. Speaker's request that I should wait until the opinions of the then Attorney General, Sir John Holker, the Solicitor General, the present Lord Chancellor, the Speaker's Counsel, and an eminent legal personage who was not named to me, and whose name, therefore, although I think I know it, I have no right to mention, had been taken, as to whether my claim to affirm was a claim which, in their opinion, was well founded in law. I stated then to Mr. Speaker Brand that, if the opinion of the majority of these personages turned out to be against me, although I thought myself right in my individual opinion, I should bow to their decision. I was told by the Clerk, Sir Erskine May, and afterwards by Mr. Speaker Brand, that if the opinion of the majority was not in my favour, the majority were certainly not against me. Under those circumstances I came to the Table, relying not merely upon my own view, but knowing that most eminent legal authority held exactly the same view as I did. I say this because the case has been sometimes put as though I had thrust a conflict upon the House of Commons, implying that I was wrong from the commencement, and that a degree of moral blame attaches to me which would naturally attach to me if the statement were true. I will assume, for the purposes of my Resolution this evening, that my claim to affirm was an ill-founded claim. Any way that is a position which I am bound to accept, because it

was so decided against me by a competent tribunal. It is right, however, that I should inform the House that in the trial at bar, in which I was defendant, the learned Chief Justice of England, referring to that decision against my claim to affirm, said—"Whether that is well or ill decided it is not for me to suggest. It is decided, and decided by authority superior to the Court sitting here." Frankly I admit that the whole difficulty in the struggle arose from my making a claim to affirm, which the Courts ultimately held to be an ill-founded claim. I have made that admission, because I desire to be as frank with the House as it is possible to be, because I wish to appeal to the generous judgment of hon. Members, as well as to their just judgment in the way in which they will deal with my Motion this evening. It is right I should remind the House that one Committee having decided, as far as a Committee can decide by its Report, that my claim to affirm was ill founded, when the matter was referred to a second Select Committee on my claiming to take the oath, this is what happened. The Journals of the House say—

"Mr. Bradlaugh, returned as one of the Members for the Borough of Northampton, came to the Table to take and subscribe the oath, and the Clerk was proceeding to administer the same to him, when Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, the Member for Portsmouth, rose to take objection and to submit a Resolution to the House."

Now, I cannot help thinking that Mr. Speaker Brand did not then act upon what was clearly his view as contained in the Journals of the 26th April, 1881, when he said that—

"The hon. Member for Northampton, having been introduced, has come to take the oath in the accustomed form, and is prepared to comply with the provision prescribed by the House, ought, under ordinary circumstances, to be continued without interruption."

I submit that the words "under ordinary circumstances" ought to have been omitted, and that between the return of a Member to Parliament and the performance of his duties at the Table imposed upon him by law, whatever they are, there should be no kind of interference, supposing that he comes regularly in compliance with the Standing Orders to that Table ready to fulfil everything imposed on him by law. If he does not fulfil these obligtions, there is then a method of trying the question by a tribunal—a Court before which all matters of fact would have to be proved and none assumed. That was not the course adopted. Sir H. D. Wolff was permitted to submit a Resolution under which the matter was referred to a Select Committee. The Report of the Committee is rather long, but I will only trouble the House with two material paragraphs contained in it, and which are those which come last. The Committee were

"of opinion that in making the claim to affirm Mr. Bradlaugh voluntarily brought to the notice of the House that on several occasions he had been permitted in Courts of Justice to affirm under the Evidence Amendment Acts, 1869 and 1870."

Therefore the Committee reported that the House could—and in their opinion, if it could, it ought to—prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from going through the form of taking the oath. The Committee pointed out that if the House prevented a duly elected Member from taking the oath or affirming, there was no power of reviewing or reversing that decision, however erroneous it might be in point of law. The Committee, therefore, recommended that should Mr. Bradlaugh again request to make and subscribe the affirmation, he should not be prevented from so doing. But the House of Commons, in its wisdom, did not accept that Report, and passed the Resolution which I now ask the House to erase from its Journals, declaring that Mr. Bradlaugh should not be permitted either to take the oath or to make an affirmation. Having put this to the House, I should like to say that there is no truth in the statement that in any fashion whatever, either directly or indirectly, have I ever sought, during any portion of the struggle, to put upon this House any opinions I hold upon any matter whatever other than those which are connected with the discharge of my political duties as a Member of this House. Now, it is clear what was the old practice of the House, and I am going to ask this House to renew and re-affirm it by erasing this Resolution from its Books. The old practice, as shown by Hatsell, vol. ii., p. 64, was that on a Member appearing to take his seat, all business was suspended until he was sworn. I do not ask the House to vary the change as to time made by the Stand-

ing Order on the 30th April, 1866. It is clear that much difficulty might arise, and some difficulty did arise, by Members coming to the Table during a debate to be sworn, and thus interrupting the business that was going on, and therefore the House ordered that Members may take and subscribe the oath required by law at any time during the sitting of the House before the Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion are entered upon, or after they are disposed of, and that no debate or business shall be interrupted for that purpose. Now am I only asking the House to say—by erasing this Resolution—that within the limits of the Standing Order nothing shall stand between a Member and the performance of his duty. I submit that the right of the electors to choose whom they will to represent them, unless that person be a person incapacitated by law, is a right of which this House should suffer no kind of deterioration or detriment. My electors had returned me in 1880, and they were entitled to my services as soon as I was ready and willing to comply with the law without any difficulty being placed in my way, and the House was bound constitutionally not to prevent me from doing what I was trying to do. I agree that the House may expel a man at its own mere will and its decision is, except by its own vote, an irreversible and unchallengeable decision, which no Court of Law can touch. By expelling a Member the House gives his constituency a right of fresh judgment—of either re-electing the Member or of choosing somebody else; but by preventing me, as the resolution did, from fulfilling the requirements of the law, it prevented the constituency from having my voice. It did not vacate the seat, but it deprived the constituency of Northampton of half of its Constitutional right of representation in the House. I am glad, in moving this Amendment to-night, I can do so with a certain sense that the particular matter which caused the struggle in my case can never happen again. First, I ask it as a measure of justice to the electors of the United Kingdom, and I ask it more, because, if the Resolution remains on the Journals of the House, there will be a precedent for a state of things so dangerous that I do not think any Members, likely to be in a minority at any time, could contemplate them with calmness, because, if the House may prevent one Member, it may prevent 10, or 20, or 40. Now, on the argument of the case of "the Attorney General v. Bradlaugh," before the Judges, the then Attorney General, the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) contended that the House not only had power to expel, but could refuse to a Member the right to sit and vote, and equally it had the power to say he should not take the oath. If that power does exist, it is a power on the part of the majority to exclude the whole minority. It is a power of a most dangerous character in time of a Party heat and ill-feeling. It is a power which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury, distinguishing himself from his capacity then as representing the House of Commons in the Law Courts, would scarcely argue for here to-night as against the people. In the whole of my struggle I did not use one word disrespectful to the House—I always spoke of it as a Chamber in which I desired to serve—as a Chamber which I did not desire to dishonour, and which I trust I am serving without dishonour to it and with some usefulness to the constituency which elected me. But I will not leave unchallenged upon the Journals of this House this Resolution. I do not know what may be the fate of my Amendment to-night. I have not the means of guessing what kind of consideration the Government will give to it, but there is one thing I do venture to believe—that there is no Member of the Government, I would even say no Member of the Conservative Party, who desires to evoke memories necessarily unpleasant and bitter, not tending on either side to make the one or the other greater, and the more the House than myself, for I am only one filling but a sand-grain place on the page of its history, soon by time to be swept away, but this House remains. I appeal to the House that there may be no third struggle. Two there have been within the past 110 years, and in each case the House, in haste and perhaps in anger, made its judgment against a man who perhaps did not deserve kindness at their hands, but at least should have justice. For the electors I am bound, if I fail to-night, Session by Session, to renew this Resolution. I

trust I may not have to waste the time of the House, which, willingly, I have never wasted and do not desire to waste, in such an undertaking, and I trust the House may feel they can accept the Resolution in the spirit in which I move it, without taunt or boasting, only entreating the High Court of Parliament to do itself the justice which none other has the power to do.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"The Resolution of this House on the 22nd day of June, 1880, 'having regard to the Reports and Proceedings of two Select Committees appointed by this House, Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to take the oath or make the affirmation mentioned in the Statute 29 Vic. c. 19, and the 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72,' be expunged from the Journals of this House, as being subversive of the rights of the whole body of Electors of this Kingdom,"—(*Mr. Bradlaugh,*)

—instead thereof.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): I think the calm atmosphere of the House at the present time is a sufficient earnest to the hon. Member that the question he has brought forward will be approached by the Government, and by any hon. Member who addresses the House, in no spirit of personal hostility to himself, and with no desire to re-awaken unpleasant memories. Sir, I would point out, in the first place, that the Motion of the hon. Member is no mere request for the assertion of a principle or doctrine in which himself believes; it is to ask the House to take the very serious step of expunging from the Journals a Resolution entered upon those Journals by the vote of a previous Parliament. Now, Sir, I hope I shall command the assent of the House, whatever their opinion upon this Resolution itself may have been, to this proposition, that no such step as that which the hon. Member asks the House to take should be taken on account of a mere difference of opinion, if such difference of opinion exist, between one Parliament and another. If it were otherwise, we might be asked to rescind Resolutions passed by previous Parliaments on any conceivable subject. Not only the inconvenience, but the unconstitutional nature of such a course is obvious. I venture, Sir, to submit to this House that the only ground upon which it could be asked that the Resolution of a former Parliament should be rescinded is this: that it should be clearly proved that the Resolution is either contrary to the law or the Constitution of the country. Well, now, what is the argument of the hon. Member? He asks the House to rescind this Resolution, in the first place in the name of justice to himself, but it appears to me that if the Resolution was in accordance with the law it was not unjust. Secondly, he asks us to do this as a protest against some terrible prospect which he holds out—that this or some future Parliament may exercise the power of debarring 10 or 20 or any number of Members from coming to the Table to take the oath and their seats. But, Sir, the mere expunging of this Resolution—if Parliament possesses such a power—could not deprive it of that power. We can only deal with this Resolution as one arrived at under certain circumstances, and applicable only to a particular case. In the first place I deny that the precedents which the hon. Member has quoted afford any argument for the course he recommends. The two precedents on which he seemed most to rely are the case of Henry Martyn and that of Wilkes, in 1782. I think that the case of Henry Martyn was not an expunging by one Parliament of a Resolution arrived at by a previous Parliament. It was merely the expunging by a Parliament of a Resolution which the same Parliament had previously arrived at, by which a disqualification had been imposed on Henry Martyn; and it must be perfectly obvious that that is a very different thing from asking the House to go back nine years and expunge a Resolution at which a previous Parliament had arrived, which certainly now imposes no disqualification on anybody. In the case of Mr. Wilkes, that gentleman moved—

"That the following Resolution, which had been passed by a previous Parliament, should be expunged—'That Mr. Wilkes having been in this Session of Parliament expelled from the House was, and is, incapable of being elected a Member to serve in this present Parliament.'"

And the House of Commons of the day, on Mr. Wilkes's Motion, expunged the Resolution from its Journals as being

subversive of the rights of the whole body of electors of this United Kingdom. But why was it subversive? Because it was considered that, although the House had, of course, the right to expel a Member, it had no right to debar the electors from returning him again if they so pleased. That does not apply to the case of the hon. Member. The Resolution which he asks us to expunge did not touch the power of the electors of Northampton to return the hon. Member as often as they choose, and, as a matter of fact, they did return him after it was passed. What the Resolution did was to express the opinion of the House of Commons that the hon. Member, after having been so returned, should not be allowed to take the oath or the affirmation prescribed in certain cases by law. What, Sir, was the effect of this Resolution, and how did the circumstances arise? As the hon. Member has very fairly admitted, they arose owing to his own action in asking to be permitted on the 3rd of May, 1880, to make an affirmation instead of taking the oath in the ordinary manner; that brought the whole case before the judgment of the House, and from that began all the subsequent proceedings in the Parliament of 1880 with regard to it. I remember when, at the commencement of the Parliament of 1886, before any hon. Members had taken the oath, I felt it my duty to place before you, Sir, by letter, the history of the case, and to ask you to submit to the judgment of the new House of Commons whether the hon. Member for Northampton should be permitted to take the oath or to affirm. You, Sir, declined to comply with the request, ruling that it was not for you nor for the House to enter into any inquisition as to what may be the opinions of a Member when he comes to the Table to take the oath. No question was then raised, and the hon. Member for Northampton took the oath like any other Member of the House. These circumstances obviously differed from the circumstances of the Parliament of 1880, when, by his own action in claiming to affirm, the hon. Member had invited the judgment of the House on his particular case. Now, Sir, I contend, in the words of one of the Committees, to which the hon. Member has referred, that there is an inherent power in the House to require that the law by which the proceedings of the House and its Members in reference to taking the oath is regulated, should be duly conformed to; and that was the power which was exercised in the Resolution which the hon. Member now asks to have expunged from the Journals. I think I can show, in the first place, that it was exercised strictly in accordance with the law. Indeed, the hon. Member has not denied it. What have been the decisions of the Courts? On March 31, 1881, the Court of Appeal decided that the hon. Member was a person who, by want of religious belief, was not entitled by the Parliamentary Oaths Act or the Promissory Oaths Act to make or subscribe an affirmation.

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I have not denied that the conclusion at which the House arrived was a conclusion in accordance with the judgment of the Court, but I deny the right or the duty of the House to arrive at any legal conclusion at all respecting a lawful return. I held that the Courts alone should do that.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I am arguing that the House in this matter did not arrive at a legal conclusion, but simply maintained and enforced the law. That was the decision of the Court of Appeal. The hon. Member, by his own action in being primarily responsible for the passage of the Oaths Act of last Session, has shown that he himself accepts the decision of that Court as good law. In January, 1885, the Court of Appeal decided that—

> "The hon. Member having been found by a jury to be a person not believing in the existence of a Supreme Being, and upon whom the oath, as an oath, had no binding effect, is, owing to his want of religious belief, incapable by law of taking and subscribing the oath at the Table."

That was the law in 1880, both as regards the taking of the oath and the right of the affirmation in the hon. Member's case. What the Resolution of the House did was simply to see that the law was enforced and carried out. The hon. Member contends it was not the duty or the right of the House to do so. But this is not the first time in the history of the present Parliament that he has brought the matter under the judgment of the House. Last Session he asked the House to declare that

Mr. Speaker should call any duly elected Member to the Table to take the oath on his presenting himself in the ordinary form, with this exception, "unless the House should otherwise order."

*MR. BRADLAUGH: I only introduced those words on the express request of the Attorney General, and stated by him to be made at the instance of the Leader of the House, who intimated that if I inserted those words which were not in my Resolution the Government would accept it. They did not carry out that pledge.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: As a matter of fact, the hon. Member did insert the words, and my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury was prepared to accept it in that form. What did the hon. Member himself say in speaking to that Motion. He said it did not touch the authority of the House, and admitted there might be occasion when the House ought to make a special order with regard to some Members. He also went on to say later on that whether or not the words were retained in the Resolution, the House would remain master of its own proceedings. He had always contended that while there was no legal limit there was a Constitutional limit to its power to meddle with the free choice of a constituency unless the person returned were legally disqualified from taking his seat. That was the hon. Member's position, for in the Parliament of 1880 he was legally disqualified from taking his seat, and the House acted on that legal disqualification, which now has been happily removed by the Act of last Session. I think the House at the time was right in its decision, and that a most dangerous precedent will be set if its Resolution should be expunged from the Journals.

*SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury): I am sure that, whatever may be the opinion of hon. Members on this matter, everyone will agree that the tone assumed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade will assist the House in coming to a decision. Sir, I agree with what the right hon. Gentleman has just said, that we ought not lightly to expunge a Resolution from the Journals of this House. Certainly, because one Parliament differs from the views of another, it has no right to expunge the Resolutions of its predecessor. That proposition will, I think, receive the assent of the great majority; for the records ought not to be, as it were, falsified by striking out Resolutions passed by previous Parliaments. But that is not the question before us. I admit that, before this Resolution is expunged, it ought to be shown that the Resolution was wrongly drawn, not because the opinions contained in it are wrong, but because something was wrongly done by the Resolution. When the matter was discussed in 1880, it fell to the lot of some of us to say that the Resolution could not be arrived at constitutionally. I quite admit that, if the Resolution had merely expressed an opinion of the Parliament of that day, it could not with propriety be expunged. But if, as in the case of Mr. Wilkes, there was an assertion of power to do an act which the House had no right to do, it is, I think, our duty to expunge the Resolution. If it is allowed to remain on the Journals of the House, in after time it will be quoted as a precedent that the Parliament of that day had the power to carry the Resolution into effect. Let me remind the House of the position taken up in 1880, and still taken up, by those who opposed the Resolution in 1880. Upon a Resolution made by the senior Member for Northampton, "That Mr. Bradlaugh do take his seat," an Amendment was moved by the present Lord Chancellor to the effect that "Mr. Bradlaugh be not allowed either to take the oath or to affirm." In answer to what has been said as to the views which were presented to the Court of Law, let me say that my belief is, in one sense, the House had right in their action—I mean in the sense that there is no power in the Court of Law to review what the House has done. The House is the High Court of Parliament, and that no other Court can control its action within its own walls. But the question is not whether the House had a technical legal right, but whether it had a Constitutional right to take the course it did take. My view then was—and it is now—that the House had no right to take such a course, and the House will never dare to take such a course again. When the hon. Member for Northampton appeared afterwards to take the oath it was admitted by the silence of those who

had previously opposed him that they had no Constitutional right to prevent him taking his seat. If a constituency returns a Member to the House, that Member has a right to take his seat. If he took his seat wrongfully by affirming when he had no right to affirm, or by pretending to take the oath when he did not take it, there is a penalty imposed which prevents the Member from continuing to take his seat, because it is a recurrent penalty. What was contended for in July, 1880, and what was then opposed by the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) was the proposition that said, "We will not let the hon. Member take the oath or affirm." The House cannot probe the reasons or thoughts of men, and it is not in the power of the majority wilfully to lay down such a proposition in order that the right may be legally tried. The present case is identical in principle with that of Wilkes. In the case of Wilkes the effect of the House's action was to say, "The constituency had no right to return Mr. Wilkes, and his opponent is returned." That was an unconstitutional Resolution. If the House prevents a Member from either taking the oath or affirming, it is a barren argument to urge that the House does not prevent the constituency from returning the same Member again. It will be but an empty form for the constituency to go on returning the Member under such circumstances; and yet of such a character is the Motion which was proposed by Sir Hardinge Giffard and carried by the House of Commons. Both in the case of Wilkes and in the present case there is an unconstitutional interference with the rights of a constituency. I believe that the resolution of 1880 was unconstitutional and wrong, and that it never ought to have been entered on the Journals of the House. What ought to be done, then? To express a contrary opinion now would be scarcely enough. It was proposed in 1880 to insert in the Resolution the words "if Parliament shall otherwise direct," but those words were, by the unanimous consent of the House, struck out, thereby admitting that no such right existed. I feel that this is a grave matter, but I believe we shall be acting constitutionally and rightly if we assert that there is no power in the hands of the House to interfere in the return of a Member of Parliament.

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir E. CLARKE, Plymouth): I cannot help thinking that the recollections of the conflict of 1880 are very acute in the mind of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir H. James). The right hon. Gentleman began by admitting that the expunging of a Resolution from the Records of Parliament was a very serious action. Of course it is absurd, unless there is some necessity to disaffirm a principle laid down in a previous Resolution. It is an idle thing to try to tear out of the history of the House of Commons one page. That does not get rid of the incident itself. If this Resolution is carried it will not alter the fact that the House of Commons did, in 1880, take upon itself the right represented by the Resolution in question. Unless it is to relieve the character of some person from stigma, or to remove some principle which ought no longer to remain in the Books of Parliament, there is no excuse for tampering with and falsifying the Records of the House by striking out part of them. The right hon. and learned Member for Bury admits that it requires a very strong case to induce the acceptance of the Resolution before the House, and he seems to think that the case of Wilkes in some way supports the proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton. There can be nothing more marked and clear than the difference between the present case and the cases of Martyn and Wilkes. In the case of Martyn the House had pronounced a disqualification against the Member, and as long as that remained on the Books, the man could not be sent to the House. But the House of Commons retracted that disqualification, and declared that it should be annulled and erased from the Books of the House. The sentence of disqualification was cancelled, and Martyn admitted to all the rights of citizenship. In the case of Wilkes, as long as the Resolution remained unaffected by any later Vote of the House, it amounted to a declaration by the House of Commons that any person who had been expelled from the House was by that very act incapacitated from being a Member of the House again. The history of the matter with regard to John Wilkes was rather a

curious one. In the year 1769 the Resolution which was complained of had been carried by a substantial majority in a full House. Afterwards Wilkes, having been again elected, took his seat, and from time to time, between 1775 and 1782, made almost annual Resolutions on the subject. At last the Resolution was passed in a careless and tired House—a House which attached very little importance to the matter. There is in the Records of the House which are generally referred to for the facts of that period no mention of the Debate or the Division which resulted in expunging the Resolution from the Journals. In the seventh volume of "debrett's Parliamentary Debates" a reference is made to the incident, but it is a very short one, very little of the Debate is given, and the Motion is stated to have been eventually carried by 115 against 47. Only one speech was thought worthy of report by the editors of those reports, and that speech was the speech of Mr. Fox—[Sir W. HARCOURT, Hear, hear!]—in which Mr. Fox protested strongly against the Motion being expunged. Mr. Fox opposed the Motion, but said—

"It was not from any false pride or fear of being thought inconsistent. He had turned the question often in his mind, and he was still convinced that the Resolution which gentlemen wanted to expunge was founded on proper principles. It was for the good of the people of England that the House should have a power of expelling any man whom the representatives of the people of England thought unworthy to sit among them; this was a privilege too valuable to be given up He supposed some cases in which the public utility of it would be felt and acknowledged; if the Bill for excluding contractors from seats in that House had been rejected in the other; and that the House of Commons should come to a Resolution of their own that no person holding a contract should sit amongst them, the present contractors losing their seats might be re-elected, and then, if not prevented by the inherent power of the House to expel, the very men whom the House should have pronounced improper to sit among them might be returned again".

The Resolution passed in 1769 was expunged in the Manuscript Journals of the House, but when they were reprinted in 1803 it was not expunged, and is to be found in the printed Journals to this day. The difference between that case and the present is perfectly clear. In respect to the present case the House had appointed two Select Committees, the first of which advised that the hon. Member (Mr. Bradlaugh) was not a person who could be allowed to affirm. That was sound law. Then the second Committee reported that the hon. Member was not a person who was capable of taking an oath.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The Committee added that in their opinion the House ought not to prevent me from affirming.

*SIR E. CLARKE: I am quite aware that that Committee added the suggestion that the hon. Member should be allowed to affirm; but in view of these declarations of the two Committees, what was the House to do? Was it to throw over the Reports of the Committees when it believed them to be sound, and to say that the hon. Member should be allowed to do one of these two things? The House of Commons was perfectly right in its law. In the conflict which ensued between the two sides of the House it was suggested by the right hon. and learned Member for Bury and those acting with him at the time that the House had no certain knowledge of the opinions of the hon. Member for Northampton, and, therefore, it ought not to take this action, but that it ought to be left to the judgment of a Court of Law. My right hon. and learned Friend has said in the course of his speech to-night that the House of Commons is a Court. It is part of the High Court of Parliament; and the House of Commons, knowing that the Member who came to the Bar was one who could not affirm and was incapable of taking an oath, was only discharging its first duty in passing that Resolution. I submit to the House that so far from being, as in the case of Wilkes, the assertion of a principle which the House may or may not now desire to get rid of, it is simply the Record of an act done by the House. There is no sense in expunging the Record from the proceedings of the House; it would be of no use to the hon. Member or to his constituents. There is nothing on the face of the Resolution which in the least degree infringes the Constitutional rights of the electors of the country, because the House took the proper course at that time in protecting itself against an illegal or profane performance taking place before it. If, however, it is suggested that the House should expunge

from the record of its proceedings acts done by the House, there would be scarcely any limit to the discussions of this kind. There is one important instance to be found on the Records of the House. Not many years ago the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian rose at the Table while Mr. O'Donnell, then the Member for Dungarvan was addressing the House, and moved that that hon. Member should no longer be heard. Your predecessor, Sir, said that no such Motion had been made for 200 years, but he could not say that it was out of order. There was a strong majority in the House at the back of the right hon. Gentleman at that time, and Mr. O'Donnell was directed to discontinue his speech at once, but when the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) followed the example of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, and proposed in the next Session that the right hon. Member should be directed to discontinue his speech, the results were different, for the hon. Member for Cork was straightway suspended. Would any sane man suggest that those incidents should be expunged from the Records? The House may have done a wise or an unwise thing; it may have adopted inconveniently an old precedent, or made an inconvenient new one, but everything which takes place in the House in the course of the Session is part of the history of the House and the country. It is as childish to suggest that a leaf should be torn out of the Records of Parliament as it would be for an angry wife to revenge herself by tearing up her marriage certificate, or for an embarrassed tradesman to put himself right by tearing a leaf out of his ledger. If a transaction takes place the record of it ought to remain. I do not say that if a Resolution on the Books of the House lays down an unsound and un-Constitutional principle, the House may not be right in expunging it in order to mark its strong sense of the wrongful principle so laid down, but the Resolution which the hon. Member asks should be expunged is the Record of an action taken by the House. That action was, in my judgment, absolutely right; I believed it to be right at the time, and I know it has been proved to be right in the Courts of Law by the proceedings which have taken place since. I appeal to the House not to do so unwise or foolish a thing as to try to erase the Resolution from our Records.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I wish that the hon. and learned Gentleman had endeavoured to deal with what, after all, is a grave Constitutional question in a somewhat more serious manner and in a style more worthy of the subject. The illustrations he gave were beneath the gravity of the occasion. The question is whether the action taken by the House at that time was un-Constitutional? I could not make out, from the hon. and learned Gentleman's quotation from the speech of Mr. Fox, whether he thought the original decision of the House of Commons in Wilkes's case was right or wrong. I think that everyone is of opinion—that every Constitutional lawyer is of opinion—I make an exception in the case of the Solicitor General—that the course taken by the House of Commons from 1769 to 1782 was thoroughly un-Constitutional. It is said that Mr. Wilkes made an annual Motion. Yes, but in what kind of Parliament did he do this? It was in the corrupt Parliament of Lord North, which did un-Constitutional acts every day. The striking out of the Resolution from the Records was one of the first acts of the first Liberal Parliament elected after the disasters of the American War. That is a chapter in the history of the matter to which the hon. and learned Gentleman did not refer. Was the declaration an un-Constitutional one? It has always been held so, because it was an assumption on the part of Parliament to prevent a Member taking his seat who had a right to take his seat. The Solicitor General says it was the bounden duty of Parliament to pass that Resolution in 1880. If it was the bounden duty of Parliament to do so because it was a right and proper Resolution, why is it not the bounden duty of this Parliament to pass a similar Resolution? What became of the sacred duty insisted on by the Solicitor General? When this Parliament was elected, the persons who had the guardianship of this legal duty were the present Law Officers of the Crown. What were they doing when they failed to declare this fundamental duty of the House of Commons to exclude the hon. Member for Northampton? They did not perform that obligation in this Parliament, because they knew that the Parliament

of 1880 had committed an un-Constitutional act, and they were ashamed to be again parties to that transaction. The Attorney General laughs. He is a bold man I know; but why did he not make the Motion? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General says the incident has taken place, and, therefore, it cannot be obliterated. Everybody knows that. We do not wish to falsify the Record, as has been suggested, but merely to point out the fact that the House of Commons committed an illegal act, and we do not desire that the precedent should remain. The question does not affect one side of the House more than the other; it is the right of the constituencies which is involved. If you choose to leave on the Records that the House of Commons—I care not whether the declaration is a legal or an illegal one—assumes to itself by a vote of the majority to declare the rights of a Member or of a constituency, you set a dangerous and an un-Constitutional precedent. If the declaration is a legal one, then the Court of Law can work it out if necessary, but if the declaration is an illegal one, then, unfortunately, there is no Court to reverse our decision or examine our conduct. That is, unfortunately, the danger of a declaration of this kind. I shall vote as I voted in 1880, against the Resolution, because, now, as then, I think, as I thought, that it is an extremely dangerous thing, and still more so after this debate and the speech of the Solicitor General, that we should allow it to remain on record that the Government has maintained the proposition that the House of Commons has a right by its own vote to determine the right of a Member to his seat, and the right of a constituency to elect him. That is the doctrine maintained on those benches, and asserted by the Solicitor General, but which they did not dare to act upon at the commencement of this Parliament. What does it mean? It means that whenever it is convenient to them—and it was not convenient to them at the beginning of Parliament—whenever it suits their purpose they will assert that principle and act upon it.

Sir JOHN GORST: The hon. Member sat in the last Parliament.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: What I am saying is in reference to the proposition of the Solicitor General. I was examining his proposition, the position that a great Party assumes in reference to this point, and I say it is a most dangerous thing. Depend upon it it is a doctrine that will be taken up by a Party to which you do not belong, and I shall deplore it as a great evil then as it is when asserted by you. It is an assertion that a Parliamentary majority may at any moment exclude a Member elected to this House as a representative of the people, may take upon itself to declare the law, not leaving that declaration to the Courts of Law. That is a most dangerous doctrine, and, therefore, I shall vote for the Motion of my hon. Friend.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided: — Ayes 112; Noes 79.—(Division List, No. 12.)

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I understand that a Scotch Member desires to bring forward a Scotch measure in which Scotch Members on this side are much interested, and I will not, therefore, stand in the way with the Motion of which I have given notice.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [7th March], reported.

(1.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £909, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

(2.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £3,290, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Land Commissioners for England."

(3.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £8,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for Stationery, Printing, and Paper, Binding, and Printed Books for the two Houses of Parliament, and for a Grant in Aid of the publication of Parliamentary Debates."

(4.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £292, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Charge which will come in course

of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1889, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland."

(5.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £12,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1889, for Criminal Prosecutions at Assizes and Quarter Sessions, and for Adjudications under 'The Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879;' and for Sheriffs' Expenses."

(6.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £20,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1889, for certain Expenses connected with the Police in Counties and Boroughs in England and Wales."

(7.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £600, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889, for the Expense of the Maintenance of Juvenile Offenders in Industrial Schools in Great Britain."

Resolutions agreed to.

FACTORS ACTS CONSOLIDATION

[Bill 80.]

SECOND READING.

*Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University): I hope the House will allow me to move the Second Reading of this Bill. It is introduced on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce and the Institute of Bankers, and is intended to consolidate the law now scattered through several Acts of Parliament and a number of legal decisions. Merchants and bankers are anxious that the law on this important subject should be comprised in one simple and comprehensible Act. There are also certain points on which the law is uncertain, or as to which, at any rate, it is not clear, and which it would be desirable to have determined. The new parts, though not important in themselves, nor involving any new points of law, are important from the magnitude of the sums involved. For instance, the legal necessity for notice in writing is done away with. As a matter of fact, it is constantly omitted. The term "advance" is extended so as to include the incurring of liability, and a factor's power to pledge is made the same as to sell, and conversely. These points, however, are technical; I believe they are generally approved; and, at any rate, they would be best dealt with in Committee. Perhaps it would be advisable that the Bill should be referred to the Standing Committee on Trade. I beg to move the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, it will be a very proper thing that the Bill should be read a second time and referred to a Committee; but it can hardly be referred at present to a Standing Committee on Trade which has not yet been appointed.

Mr. BARING (London): I hope the Bill will be referred to examination by the Standing Committee on Trade, and I hope the Government propose, as soon as possible to set up this Standing Committee.

*Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Baronet confines his Motion to Second Reading and names a day for Committee it will be competent for him when that date arrives to move the discharge of the Order, and to move that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for March 15.

HERRING FISHERY (SCOTLAND) BILL

[Bill 16.]

SECOND READING.

Colonel MALCOLM (Argyllshire): I have to express my thanks to the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Healy) for yielding me the opportunity of moving the Second Reading of this Bill. For three years it has been before the House unsuccessfully. I think I need only say that it is brought in at the wish of the fishermen themselves, and so far as has been possible the details have been arranged with them in various parts of Scotland, and as I believe there is no desire to debate the Bill now, I do not propose to make any observations on matters of detail that had better be left to the Committee stage. In relation to Clause 6, I may just mention that Section 2 gives power to the Fishery Board to make alterations that I think will carry out the wishes of hon. Members opposite. I now beg to move the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries): I have not the slightest intention of offering any opposition to the Bill at this stage, and when I hear that it is designed in accordance with the interests of the fishermen generally, it would be churlish in me to do so. All I say is, that the Bill comes forward at a very early period of the Session. I am aware that it has been introduced before, but there has not been opportunity to Members representing fishery constituencies to communicate with their constituents, and I desire to have that opportunity in reference to certain clauses before they are irrevocably diposed of. I am satisfied the hon. and gallant Member will recognize the reasonableness of this, and defer the next stage to a reasonable date for the purpose. Without in any way committing myself, I hope we may be given to understand that while the Government accept this Bill, they maintain an open mind in regard to its application to different parts of Scotland, and will be ready to consider representations made by different localities. I do not offer opposition now, feeling sure that our interests and convenience will be consulted as I indicate.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): I am quite ready to assent to the Second Reading, and I agree with the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries, that it is necessary in regard to the Bill, which largely consists of detail, that the House should maintain an open mind as to the ultimate adjustment of the clauses. I apprehend my hon. and gallant Friend will not be indisposed to take the Second Reading on that footing. As the House is aware, the Bill emanates, to a large extent, from those who have and deserve the confidence of fishermen, and there is on the part of the Government, and, I think, of the various sections of the House, every disposition to give it the most favourable consideration. I congratulate my hon. and gallant Friend upon obtaining thus early the Second Reading of a measure with which he has so faithfully persevered, and with relation to which he enjoys so large an amount of sympathy.

Bill read a second time, and committed for April 5th.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 31.]

SECOND READING.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill I need only say a few words. The Land Act of 1887 left a considerable number of perpetuity and long leaseholders outside its provisions, and this Bill merely provides that these leaseholders shall have the right to purchase out their interest under Lord Ashbourne's Act or have a fair rent fixed by the Land Court. I hope the House will accept the Second Reading, and in that event I shall be ready to fix the Committee for a distant date so that all care and consideration may be given to the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, Dublin University): This is a Bill the Government are not able to accept. Its principle is contrary to the principle of the measure which has been attended with so much success in Ireland. Lord Ashbourne's Act is purely voluntary in its action, and the great defect of this Bill is that is against the main principle of that Act. I recognize the attempt to deal with the case of the perpetuity leaseholders, which presents itself to the hon. Member's mind as a grievance in connection with the Irish Land Question, and no doubt the Bill is an honest attempt to deal with it; but proceeding on the lines I have indicated, the Bill contains a principle which the Government cannot accept, and, therefore, I must oppose the Second Reading.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I think I never heard a Bill proposed in a more extraordinary manner; and it is equalled in the way in which it is opposed. We have had nothing from the proposer of the Bill—not the slightest heartiness or the slightest desire evinced to see it carried into

effect, and from the manner in which it has been met we might gather that the whole thing was arranged beforehand between the Government and the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The hon. Member discharges a pious duty towards a certain portion of his constituents in proposing the Bill, without the least desire to see it carried; he proposes it in a half-hearted manner, without advancing the slightest reason in its support, while the Government think so lightly of him and his Bill, that the Solicitor General for Ireland disposes of them with the briefest words. I am very glad indeed to see the great Liberal Union Alliance has come down to this. I am rejoiced to think this is the result of the great Liberal Unionist compact with the *Times*. "That it should come to this!" The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, when he kicks out the Bill, kicks with so little ceremony that he does not, out of courtesy to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, spend a few words to give a decent grace to the act of summary dismissal. This is a most instructive evening for the constituents of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. We have him posing as a supporter of the Union, but at the same time he is most anxious that the "diggers and delvers" of South Tyrone, the people who till the soil, the honest Orangemen, the people who love their country—not as we do—the hard-headed people of South Tyrone, who love the Government of law and order, should get their rights in Parliament by returning a Member who, while cordially supporting the Union, and all the great purposes of the Union, is at the same time the extremest Radical on Land Questions. Well, we have seen to-night what all this flummery amounts to. I observe the Chancellor of the Exchequer growing slightly uneasy; will he, with Liberal Unionist force and humour, express to the House the great advantages of this measure from a Liberal Unionist point of view, this Bill which has "some features that specially recommend it"? The Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1887 professed the principle of admitting leaseholders under 99 years to the right of having fair rents fixed; but why are 99 years' lease to be omitted and 100 years to be left outside? I hope Members of the Government are not promoting a "count" against this great Liberal Unionist question. I do not wish to detain the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) to listen to me, but to wait for the reply of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. The gloom in which we were obscured in 1887 was suddenly irradiated by the light of a Liberal Unionist Chancellor of the Exchequer. Persons who hold for longer than 99 years, he says, must be considered as purchasers—they must be considered as having a perpetuity; and the great object of the Liberal Unionist Party and the Tory Party, of which he is so distinguished a Member—for he spoke of the Tories the other day as "We the Tory Party"—is to root in the tillers of the soil perpetuity of tenure. We had to allow the Bill of 1887 to pass in that shape and form, but stirring meetings were held in Ireland on this subject at the end of 1887 and during the whole of 1888, and the Ulster leaseholders clamoured for relief. Well, it is rather remarkable that the only class of persons for whom the learned Solicitor General for Ireland has no sympathy, and whom he proposes to exclude from the benefit of a fair rent under this Liberal Unionist measure, are the loyal classes of Ireland. These classes would have nothing to do with us. Oh, no; they would not touch us with a 40-foot pole. They are all "loyal men and true," and they entrust their fortunes to that distinguished Member of this House, the Member for South Tyrone. They know that he is employed about the country, paid by some mysterious source, acting on behalf of the Government, speaking in the name of the Government, promising that there will be evictions here and no evictions there, and they naturally thought they might treat with this Plenipotentiary on the Land Question. The hon. Member for South Tyrone gets up to-night, and how does he treat these poor people, the long leaseholders? Why, he does not even pretend to argue the question. He dismisses it in a sentence without so much as pretending to understand it. It is not as though he were dealing with a subject which could be disposed of in a sentence, or as if there were no time to discuss the Bill. With a view to enable it to come on—and, in part, to oblige the Scotch Members — I re-

frained from bringing forward a Motion which I had put down on the paper. I must say I had an eye to the bringing on of this great hybrid piece of Liberal Unionist legislation. We have three and a half hours before us for the discussion of this Bill, but the hon. Member for South Tyrone did not occupy three and a half minutes in describing the grievances of the long leaseholders. I doubt if he took half a minute, and though we are all anxious to get on with the business I must say that I think the fate of these unfortunate leaseholders is a subject which should have induced the hon. Member who so keenly sympathizes with them to pour out from his bleeding heart a word or two of commiseration for their woes, as he had the opportunity of doing to-night. It is seldom that a private Member has an opportunity of this kind. It is only in consequence of your very fair ruling, Sir, that any Member of the House had the opportunity of bringing on this legislation. Your ruling gave an opportunity which anyone desirous of promoting the interests of the Irish farmer would gladly have availed himself of, and that is exactly the opportunity which the hon. Member for South Tyrone has thrown away. To-night is the first opportunity we have had for years of bringing on a private Member's Bill on Friday night when Supply is put down. It is a golden opportunity—a Liberal Unionist opportunity—an opportunity which I should have thought the hon. Member for South Tyrone would gladly have seized hold of. I can only deplore that Her Majesty's Government and the Liberal Unionist Party should have no heart in a measure for the relief of the Ulster farmers. We all know there is no Irish grievance which the Liberal Unionist Party are not pining to remove so long as its removal does not interfere with the Union. Oh, the anxiety of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) to remove Irish grievances! Those grievances are killing him. Well, here is a chance of depriving the miserable agitators who infest Ireland, and are the bane of that unhappy country, of another grievance. One would expect the First Lord of the Treasury to spring to his feet with alacrity, and say, "This measure may not be perfect in its details; there may be some faults of draftsmanship about it; there may be some little defects in it one way or the other, but we will not reject the Second Reading; we will send it to a Select Committee, or even give it the favour we extend to Scotch herrings—we will send it up to a Standing Committee." But, Sir, Scotch herrings are one thing and Irish tenants are another. The grievances of the Scottish fishermen may be dealt with by a Standing Committee; but Irish farmers, even under the wing of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, are to be kicked out of this House without even a word of sympathy, or without even the pretence of argument, by the learned Solicitor General for Ireland. Now, Sir, I desire, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone has entirely betrayed the cause of those who entrusted him with this important measure, to say one or two words upon the scope of the Bill. I know, of course, that the Liberal Unionist Government are most anxious for a "count out;" and no doubt the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone would be happy to promote it with them, but I decline to enter into that conspiracy. I intend to take advantage of this unusual chance that has been afforded to us to expose exactly, in the light of day, the state of the case and the situation as it has now presented itself; and I may say, in the first instance, that this measure represents the united action—I am speaking now of the measure to include in the benefits of the Land Act all leaseholders—of a large organized body of Loyalists in Ireland. Now, an Irish Loyalist is so rare a specimen of an Irishman that I should have thought the hon. Member for South Tyrone would have thought it right to tell us something about his grievances. These people who are excluded from the benefits of the Land Act are, as a rule, members of the Loyalist Party. They have been labouring under their grievance patiently, because, above all things, the beauty of the Irish Loyalist is that he is a patient animal. He is always boasting about his patience—he is always telling us that he does not go out with a mask on his face, or with moonlighters. He lies as quietly as a slug under a garden roller, and takes every unpleasantness that falls to his lot as if it were a dispensation from

Providence, instead of a dispensation of the Government. These Irish leaseholders have begged and prayed of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone to submit their case to a sympathetic House of Commons. They say—

"This is an Imperial Parliament; we are all anxious to be under the rule of such a Parliament, and we, therefore, expect that our grievances will be attended to by it, and we confidently submit to the House that it is unfair that we should be under rack rents, whilst our neighbour across the road, whose lease is only for ninety-nine years, is able to go to the Land Court and get a fair rent fixed."

I would ask on what ground can this abominable disability be continued? I say there is no ground, and that, as a matter of fact, since the Act of 1870 was passed, leases for extremely long periods have been forced on the tenants at the point of the bayonet; and it is because these men have had these leases forced on them for these long periods that now you refuse to remedy the situation. I say that there is no logic, reason, or common sense in that position, and one might at least expect that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who in his position as a leading Liberal Unionist has done so much service to the Government on this Irish Land Question, which I believe he so thoroughly understands — which I believe he understands as well as the Egyptian Canal Question — I should have expected that he would have said, "Let us go to the Select Committee and take evidence, and see what is the extent and scope of this grievance." But what does he do? I saw him put up the Irish Solicitor General—who, I am bound to say, I do not think understands anything about the Bill. There is not a keener intellect in the House than that of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and if he had been afforded two minutes he would have digested the Bill and understood all about it. But the Government put him up—and it may be that even now, at the eleventh hour, they may mean to retrace their steps, because I observe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been bending his giant mind to the task of understanding the measure of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. I do trust that as I am making this appeal on behalf of the Loyalists of Ulster the Government will now consider it in a fair and reasonable spirit. I am quite free to admit that the consideration of the clauses of the measure may, perhaps, be relegated to a more favourable opportunity when a "count" is not in the offing; but with regard to the proposal to admit leaseholders, I do say that if the Government will accept my assurance that the Loyalists in Ireland would be most gratified to see this principle accepted, and will do something to secure its adoption, they will be taking a step in the right direction. Let them remember that most of these loyal and long-suffering leaseholders are Orangemen and most strenuous supporters of the Unionist Party, and that a number of them came over to this country not long ago, and poured into the sympathetic bosom of Lord Salisbury an account of their grievances. Has it come to this—that after this measure has been so fully explained by this worthy body of men, it is to meet with such scant courtesy on the part of a House which has such ample time to attend to it? I hope it will be understood in the country that the House of Commons has no other business but this before it. There is not a single item of business remaining on the Paper except this, and we have yet some hours at our disposal before the hour for adjournment. Parliament, for once in its long-centuried historical existence, has perfect leisure to attend to this small Irish grievance; and I, therefore, do trust that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with that anxiety he feels to remove Irish grievances—reasonable grievances put forward by the hon. Member for South Tyrone in a calm spirit and in a business-like way, embracing, I believe, two sentences—the time of the House not having been taken up with long and wordy harangues—I do trust, I say, that the right hon. Gentleman will, at least, condescend to give attention to this measure. And I say, for my own part, that, representing as I do a Nationalist constituency, I would sincerely urge the Government, if they want to assure their supporters in the Loyalist districts of Ireland of the earnestness of their desire to remove grievances, to regard this question of leaseholders as one which, above all others, should be attended to. It cannot be pretended—and this is a misfortune from the

Government point of view—that there is not ample time to attend to the matter. If you were to count out the House it would show that you were indifferent to the interests of the Loyalists of Ireland, and were ready to count out a measure introduced by one of your own supporters. Therefore you are debarred from such ruthless procedure as that. There only remains then the question, as you have ample time, "oceans" of it, in which to deal with this measure, what is it that stops you from doing justice to the Irish leaseholders? It cannot be want of will, because we know you have most anxiously at heart the improvement of the material prosperity of the Irish people. We know you have no arguments, as the Solicitor General for Ireland—than whom you could not have a keener advocate—had none to offer, and he met the thing with a simple *non possumus*. It cannot be that you have not sufficient time, or that you want a count out. I have shown how this particular measure has the strongest claim upon the time and attention of Parliament. I have disposed of every possible objection that can be taken to it; I have shown that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone has been sent to this House by a body of Loyalists most anxious in every way to uphold the Union, and that he, as their spokesman, asks you to attend to the measure. And I, uniting and associating myself to the fullest extent with the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone—joining myself with him in the desire that this House should do ample justice to the Loyalists, I do trust that you will, to-night, by passing this measure, do an act of justice which will enable this House, and especially its Unionist Members, for all future time to say that nothing shall stand between them and justice to Ireland when the great cause of the Union is not interfered with.

*MR. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): I have listened with considerable interest to the somewhat lengthy speech of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. T. Healy), who has just sat down, and I regret the tone of levity which pervaded the greater part of it. In my opinion, the subject of land, in connection with Irish tenants, is one that ought not to be treated with levity in this House. I can assure hon. Members opposite that we English agriculturists watch with great interest all measures that are brought forward in this House relative to Irish land and Irish tenancies, and I am sure there are many on this side of the House who are sincerely anxious, where it can be shown that there is anything unfair in connection with those tenancies, that the unfairness shall be as speedily as possible removed. We are all perfectly well aware of what the Irish tenants must have suffered; for the agricultural depression which affects them, as well as the English tenants, has been common to all parts of the United Kingdom, and we can honestly say that, whenever there is a reasonable opportunity of doing so, we are desirous of assisting in the passage of measures that will, to some extent, alleviate the difficulties of our Irish brother farmers. But I think the hon. Member for Longford was hardly serious in the speech he made—and a most interesting speech it was—or he would not have treated with so much levity a subject which we are told is one of so much importance to the Irish tenants. This Bill has come somewhat unexpectedly before the House, owing to some accidental circumstances; and in dealing with it as it now stands, I would ask hon. Members on that side of the House whether, if Her Majesty's Government had proposed to deal with so important a question as this unexpectedly, they would not have been the very persons to get up in their places and say, "How can you undertake to deal with such a question as this without having given the House sufficient time to consider it?" I can assure hon. Members opposite that the interest felt in this question does not belong altogether to that side of the House, and I say without hesitation that every Member on this side of the House is anxious that all questions connected with Irish tenancies should be dealt with not in an off-hand way, as will be the case to-night, but

with that consideration and care which its importance demands. If Lord Ashbourne's Act has worked well—and I have never heard it suggested that as far as it goes it is not a beneficial and a good Act—I ask, would it not be a pity to make a departure from it? I am not sure that the Irish Members opposite take the best course when they so persistently find fault with Her Majesty's Government whenever it proposes to do anything; and then, on the other hand, as persistently blame it for something it does not propose to do. This line of action is injuring the Nationalist Party in this country, and I say so with perfect honesty. As long as the Nationalist Party are only going for measures of justice which the English tenants themselves would like to see passed, they will be supported not only in this House but in the country generally; but I am sure the English people will not be impressed with the earnestness of the Irish Members on this occasion, as evidenced by the speech of the hon. Member for Longford. We on this side of the House have all along recognized that there are undoubted Irish grievances, and we desire to see them brought forward in an honest way and with a single purpose; but we do not think they should be made a stalking-horse for the mere purpose of getting the Party that now holds the reins out of office and of placing another Party in office. We want all grievances brought before the country in a *bonâ fide* way, and to see them when before this House debated with earnestness. If hon. Members opposite will only accept this hint from me, in the belief that it is made with perfect sincerity, and will put before us genuine measures dealing with questions of Irish land and Irish tenancies, they will find that hon. Members on this side will be more inclined to listen to their arguments than when our debates are mixed up with so much bitter Party feeling. I implore hon. Members opposite to try and drop that bitterness, and put before us what they regard as practical remedies for the grievances of the Irish tenants. In that case I believe that many of us on this side of the House would do all in our power to get those practical remedies carried into effect as speedily as possible. If, however, you are to go behind Lord Ashbourne's Act and alter the greater principle of that measure without due consideration——

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I would point out to the hon. Member that this Bill, so far from upsetting Lord Ashbourne's Act, actually proposes to extend that Act to a certain class of tenants now exempted from it.

*Mr. C. W. GRAY: I accept the statement of the hon. Member, but I think my argument will apply equally to the way in which he has put the case. If you apply Lord Ashbourne's Act in the manner now proposed, without being very careful of what you are doing, you may set up precedents which will eventually land you in great difficulty. We English tenants watch all these proposed changes with a great deal of interest, because we are not sure how soon the time may come when we shall be seeking similar reforms for ourselves; and this is one reason why I so anxiously hope that when this question is practically debated there will be a fair attendance of those Members who represent English agricultural interests in this House, I do not see why we should not be able to give you a helping hand.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I would call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that he is not discussing the Second Reading of the Bill.

*Mr. C. W. GRAY: I bow, Sir, to your ruling, and am sorry you have had the trouble to rise; but I do not wish to go into the details of the Bill.

Mr. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): Will you permit me to say that, as an Irish Member, I quite recognize the friendly and kindly spirit in which the hon. Member for Maldon has just spoken, and I am quite sure if the same spirit were more frequently evinced by hon. Gentlemen opposite—and I am sorry to see now those empty benches—when questions affecting the agricultural tenants of Ireland are discussed, they would be more speedily and more satisfactorily settled. One reason given for the rejection of

this Bill by the hon. Member, which was applauded by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was that it had been brought forward unexpectedly. Any Member, either inside or outside the House, knows very small that this question of he leaseholders of Ireland is an old one. Any gentleman in the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who knows, or professes to know, the condition of Ireland, would be aware that no Parliamentary Session could open without the question of the leaseholders of Ireland being brought forward. Therefore I think that the excuse given for the action of the Government—that this Bill has come on unexpectedly—is not a genuine one. This question has been before the House on many previous occasions. It is a pressing and vital question. The right hon. Gentleman knows very well from experience that a large number of his supporters from Ireland have every cause to complain of the action of the Government on this question. Now, although we have not perhaps many friends among the leaseholders, and anxious as we are to settle the social condition of Ireland, we are also anxious to press upon this House the necessity of dealing with this question as quickly as possible. We must press the Government to take some other action than they have taken to-night. I hope the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone is proud of his friends, and of the action of the present Government, which he supports through thick and thin. I daresay he thought that they would have accepted his Bill; so, without deigning to give one single word of explanation, he moved the Second Reading. I hope that he is grateful to the Government, and that he will convey to the leaseholders of Ireland the fact that they have nothing to hope for from the present Government. I hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will yet tell us the Government do not intend to meet this Bill with a point-blank refusal. They cannot plead the excuse that there is no time to debate it, for we have nearly three hours before us. The Bill might even be advanced by promising to deal with it in Committee; at least the promise might be held out that the leaseholders will be assisted in the coming year. There are many clauses of the Bill with which I do not agree, but I hope the Government will not shut the door on the principle that it is their duty to come to the assistance of the leaseholders of Ireland.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I think that hon. Members below the Gangway opposite have enjoyed the opportunity of displaying a little political hypocrisy. But they have disguised the fact that this is entirely an unexpected debate. The hon. Member who has just sat down, by a rather clever rhetorical device, suggested that the Bill was not unexpected. Certainly it was not thought by any Member of this House that the evening would be devoted to this subject. The hon. Member has challenged us to take a Division, but we ought not to do so in the absence of those who are interested in the Bill which they did not expect would be debated to-night. Why, the hon. Member himself is said to have stated he did not expect it to come on.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I never was consulted on the matter.

MR. GOSCHEN: The language which was used by the hon. Member to some Members of the House was that he did not expect to be able to reach this Bill to-night.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will allow me to say that the Bill came on quite unexpectedly to myself, but I never said to any Member that I did not expect it to come on, I had no conversation about the Bill. and it was only when the House was dividing on the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton that I recognized it would come on.

MR. GOSCHEN: Then the impression conveyed to me was not absolutely correct. The hon. Member says he had no idea it was coming on; neither had

the Irish Secretary nor hon. Members from Ireland who are interested in it. In such circumstances it has often been the practice to adjourn the debate on a Bill reached unexpectedly. I am sure my hon. Friend is quite aware that if the Chief Secretary had had any idea that the Bill would come on he would have been in his place and have been able to deal with the Bill. No disrespect was intended to those Members by the Solicitor General, and I am sure the hon. Gentleman will not see in anything that has happened any intention on the part of the Government to treat with any disrespect the proposals he has brought before the House. The hon. Gentleman will see that there is a wide difference between this Bill and Lord Ashbourne's Act, for while the latter makes the expropriation of owners voluntary the hon. Gentleman's Bill will make it compulsory. I would suggest that the hon. Member should consent to the adjournment of the debate. If the Bill be pressed to a Division in the absence of those who take an interest in it, the Government will have no option but to vote against it. The Government are, however, anxious that every opportunity should be given for the discussion of the Bill, and I think the best course will be to adjourn the debate.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I can only speak by the indulgence of the House; but I hope I may be allowed to say that if I introduced the Bill in a somewhat summary way, it was because I saw every Member wished the early adjournment of the House, and I thought the Government might assent to the Second Reading. I wish to point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if I accept the suggestion to adjourn the discussion to another day I shall be practically giving up my chance of bringing on again a Bill which I believe to be urgently necessary in the interest of a large number of leaseholders in every part of Ireland, for the Government have given no promise of facilities for another day to continue the discussion. I have a duty to perform as a Member of this House, and unless I get such a promise I must press the Motion to a Division.

*MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E): I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not press a Motion for the adjournment of the debate. It is quite notorious that the principle of this Bill has been before the Government during the last two Sessions; and if it is only for the purpose of gaining time as regards the clauses, the Second Reading can be assented to, with the reservation on the part of the Government that it will deal with them in Committee. I am sure that, as a Scotchman, I shall not be charged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with speaking on this subject in a bantering tone or sarcastic manner; but I think the case of the Irish leaseholders is so pressing that every Member who represents an agricultural constituency should lose no opportunity of bringing the principle of the Bill before the House. I hope the hon. Member for South Tyrone will take the sense of the House on it.

The House divided:—Ayes 46; Noes 87.—Majority 41.—(Division List, No. 13.)

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who has returned to the House, whether he is aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has said it was impossible to discuss the Bill, which has just been defeated in his absence; and whether he will now favour the House with his views upon it?

No answer was given to the hon. Member's question.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at Ten o'clock till Monday next.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 13.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 18.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 11th March, 1889.

HOUSE OF LORDS (DISCONTINUANCE OF WRITS) BILL.

A Bill to authorise the cancellation, discontinuance, and re-issue in particular cases of writs of summons to the House of Lords—Was presented by the Earl of Carnarvon; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday, 19th March. (No. 18.)

PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN THE METROPOLIS.—QUESTION.

LORD LAMINGTON, in rising to call the attention of the House to the state of the public buildings in the Metropolis, said: My object in bringing forward the question of public buildings so early in the Session is to anticipate the Estimates in the House of Commons; because, as a general rule, whenever there is any proposal made in this House with reference to improvements in public buildings, the answer is that the money is already appropriated. I am not going to complain of what the Government has done during the Recess in the matter of public buildings; I cannot make that complaint, because they have done nothing at all. With respect to the public offices, and especially the Admiralty and the War Office, this discussion has been going on for 25 years. Committee after Committee have sat, plan after plan has been proposed, there has been the battle of sites and the battle of designs, and yet nothing has been done at all. It is a most extravagant policy, because the country is paying for the hire of public offices an amount of rent which, if capitalized, would have erected the most beautiful and perfect buildings possible. I hope Her Majesty's Government will be able to explain why the plan proposed in 1886 has not been carried into effect. My great object in bringing forward this question is to show the indifference, not only of this Government, but of every other Government, to this important subject. Take, for instance, the question of the housing of the National Portrait Gallery, a collection thoroughly worthy of the country, which was removed to the Bethnal Green Museum some three years ago, at the instance of Mr. Gladstone, who was one of the trustees. I was a trustee, and I ventured to differ with Mr. Gladstone, but the collection was removed. Mr. Gladstone was then in office, and he assured Parliament that suitable provision would be made and an adequate gallery provided; but nothing has been done. There the pictures remain in Bethnal Green, and the more recent acquisitions are hid away in any cellars that are available in the National Gallery. After all, the exhibition of the pictures at Bethnal Green has not added one visitor to the ordinary number of those who attend the Museum there; the pictures are treated with absolute indifference. I submit, my Lords, that it is intolerable that this magnificent collection—especially that unique collection of portraits of the illustrious men of our country which could not be replaced if destroyed by fire or otherwise—should be deposited in a quarter of the town where they are practically lost. The trustees of the National Gallery have presented a memorial, "urging upon the Government the desirability of providing a suitable place for the pictures now

located in Bethnal Green Museum," but no notice has been taken of the memorial. As to the question of site, there are two sites already available, either one of which could be secured at a comparatively small expense. I may mention especially the site of Lord Carrington's former house in Whitehall. As an instance of the unsatisfactory policy pursued with regard to public buildings generally, I may refer to the Parliament Street Improvement, for which a sum of £17,000 was voted. Instead of a good plan being decided upon and carried out, and all the buildings on what is called the George Street site being pulled down, and a handsome block of public offices, close to the Houses of Parliament, and in every way convenient, being erected, the work of demolition and reconstruction was entrusted to a company, and after the lapse of two years nothing has been done. My Lords, this is really the only country in the world where no interest whatever is taken, either by the rulers or the people, in the beauty of its Metropolis. In Rome, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna the public buildings are worthy of great capitals, and even in our Colonies the people take great pride in their public buildings; but here nobody seems to care. With regard to the new buildings on the west side of Westminster Hall, I admit that outside the work is well done; but inside it has been discovered that there is no space, according to the plans, to make a necessary corridor, so that the rooms actually run into one another, and are of on use at all. It is the same with the Royal Courts of Justice. There is not half the accommodation required. There are corridors which lead nowhere and windows which let in no light. I think that the Government should either explain the causes of this unsatisfactory condition of things, or else contend boldly that they have no responsibility in the matter. I beg to ask the Question of which I have given notice.

*LORD HENNIKER: I have no doubt your Lordships will appreciate as I do the intention of my noble Friend in bringing this question before your Lordships' House. I have no doubt that he wishes to see improvements carried on in the Metropolis, and he would also like to see those valuable collections of pictures and portraits which belong to the country properly housed. I will not follow my noble Friend through all his observations, because I have answered some of those questions during the last two or three years, over and over again. With regard to the Admiralty and War Office buildings, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Parliament Street improvements, to which my noble Friend has referred, the House is aware that a great many plans have been placed before Parliament and the public for a long time past, and the plan known as that of Leeming and Leeming had not only been adopted, but the work had been commenced. Parliament interfered and took the question up, and a Committee was appointed in 1885, and re-appointed in 1887, to take the whole thing in hand; and, because they had done nothing immediately, it was hardly right to blame the Office of Works for the delay. The plan to be adopted for the Admiralty would be the basis upon which the War Office plans would be considered, because the one greatly depends upon the other. I have never given any pledge as to what would be done; I have only tried to tell exactly what was being done. The carrying out of plans by the Office of Works depends entirely on the Parliamentary grants; and this year, owing to the special demands on the Chancellor of the Exchequer in connection with the Navy, it is more than ever improbable that money will be forthcoming for public works. With regard to the Admiralty, a small sum has been put into the Estimates for the purpose of allowing the work to be begun. A proper home for the pictures in the National Portrait Gallery will be built as soon as the money is granted. There will be no difficulty in the matter of plans or sites, so soon as the necessary funds are available. My noble Friend said just now that he thought the pictures would never come back from Bethnal Green; but I must remind him that they were sent distinctly on loan, and they will be brought back as soon as there is a proper lodging for them. With respect to improvements in Parliament Street, a private company two years ago obtained an Act of Parliament for the erection of certain buildings, on the condition that £500,000 was raised before the works were begun. This condition has delayed the carrying out of the

scheme, but I am informed privately that there is no doubt that the requisite money will be subscribed before very long. The Office of Works have made proposals to the promoters of the company for the sale of certain land in Parliament Street in which the Government had an interest; and though no official reply has yet been received, the First Commissioner of Works has reason to believe that the proposals made as to price and so on will be acceptable to the promoters.

At a subsequent period:—

LORD SANDHURST: I understood from the statement of the noble Lord (Lord Henniker) that there were about 140,000 visitors to the National Portrait Gallery before the removal of the collection to Bethnal Green. I should like to know if he could tell us in round figures what the number of visitors has been since the removal?

*LORD HENNIKER: I have not the figures with me, but I believe that last year and the year before last there were three or four times as many visitors to the Portrait Gallery at the Bethnal Green Museum as compared with the number who visited the National Portrait Gallery in the year immediately preceding the removal of the collection.

DOCK ACCOMMODATION AT BOMBAY.

QUESTION.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government whether any definite arrangement has been made for providing the requisite dock accommodation for the ships of Her Majesty's Navy at Bombay, said: My Lords, a Question upon this subject was, as far back as December last, put by me to Her Majesty's Government, and I was on that occasion answered by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for India, who said that the negotiations between the India Office and the Admiralty, which naturally must precede any definite adoption of plans, were almost completed, and that he hoped that very shortly the works would be commenced. My noble Friend—and indeed everyone who has had to do with the Admiralty—have repeatedly expressed their opinion—an opinion in which I am quite sure every noble Lord who has considered this subject will concur—that docks at Bombay, capable of accommodating the largest vessels, are absolutely necessary; and the question I wish to ask is, whether there is any hitch in the progress of the matter; and, if so, whether that hitch will be very shortly removed, so that the works may go forward? I think I need not take up your Lordships' time by pointing out the extreme necessity which exists for this work. In the event of war, we should have a great deal of work for our Navy in these seas, and quite probably in the immediate vicinity of Bombay. Without wishing to re-open the interesting discussion we had the other day upon the question of dock accommodation at Gibraltar, I may just point out that the views which my noble Friend (Lord Carnarvon) expressed on that occasion certainly do not hold good in this instance, for the distance from the Indian Seas to the nearest available dock is very much greater than the distance which my noble Friend quoted as being sufficient for Gibraltar—namely, three days' sail from Plymouth. Some years ago an accident occurred in the Indian Ocean to a ship much smaller than the vessels which we should be employing in the event of actual hostilities, and she had to be towed all the way through the Red Sea to Suez, simply because in our greatest Colony, in which centres an enormous proportion of our commerce, where it is quite certain our Possessions would be the object of the strongest attack by any enemy, there was no accommodation for the repairs that were necessary. The nearest dock is at Mauritius, which is not a Government dock, and it is some 3,000 miles away. The next nearest dock is at Hong Kong. So that, in the event of accident to any vessel on the Indian Station, she would have to be taken off the station, which would thereby be, to the extent of that vessel's capabilities, unprotected. Her Majesty's Government have stated on two previous occasions that they were bound to see the construction of a naval dock at Bombay carried forward at once, and I should like them to explain why the work has been entirely suspended, and nothing whatever done for the last 12 months.

LORD ELPHINSTONE: I can assure your Lordships that the Government are fully sensible of the desirability, and

even of the absolute necessity, of having a dock at Bombay. I admit at once the force of the arguments that have been put forward by my noble Friend; but, owing to more pressing demands of an important character, it has not been found advisable to commence the work of construction this year. There is a scheme which has, practically, the approval of the Admiralty, for the construction of a first-class dock at Bombay; but, pending the distribution of the expense between the Imperial and the Indian Governments, the matter is still under the consideration of both Governments. My noble Friend may permit me to remind him that there is already at Bombay a dock belonging to the Port Trust, which will be available for small vessels, and they are now constructing a graving dock inside.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): I should like to add that, with regard to the action that is being taken by the Port Trust at Bombay, I have had private intimation that a larger dock might be constructed if certain money were handed over by the Government to assist in the cost of construction. Seeing the great delay that has taken place on the part of the Imperial Government, I am now in communication with the Government of India to see whether we cannot come to some arrangement with the Bombay Port Trust, in order to make the graving dock of theirs of sufficient size to take the largest vessels. I am quite aware that that would involve the enlarging of the wet dock, through which all the ships would have to pass in order to get to the graving dock; but I am informed privately that there would be practically no difficulties in the way except that of money, and I hope that some arrangement may be come to between the Imperial and the Indian Governments, whereby something, at all events, may be done in the way of assisting the Bombay Port Trust to so enlarge their docks that they may be utilized in case of need by Her Majesty's Navy.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: As my noble Friend (Viscount Sidmouth) has referred to what I said the other day, I rise just to make two observations. So far from objecting to the construction of a dock at Bombay, I am very glad to bear out what has been said by my noble Friend as to the urgent necessity of carrying out that work. As a matter of fact, Bombay is so situated that there is no convenient dock within a large distance which would be available in such an emergency as that contemplated by the noble Lord. But I must protest against the argument of my noble Friend, when he asked what would be the consequences of a breakdown near Gibraltar. If there was any logical conclusion to be drawn from the argument, it was that we should have a large dock constructed there at enormous expense, which would, after all, not be in a tenable and defensible position. I confess that I object to the construction of a dock at Gibraltar, and I do so on the broad ground that it is not possible, as I understand, in the present condition of modern gunnery, to make it defensible against an enemy who held the Spanish heights. If, in the chances and exigencies of war, Spain were to be our opponent, the dock at Gibraltar would be wholly indefensible. The case of Bombay, however, as my noble Friend knows, and as must be appreciated by anyone with naval experience, is entirely different. A dock there is, as far as I understand, desirable; and I shall be glad to see it constructed as rapidly as possible.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON: Having brought the question of dock accommodation at Bombay before your Lordships last Session, I wish to point out that the answer then given was that there was no ironclad on the Indian Station, and that our fleet in Indian waters was, notwithstanding, superior in force to that of any other Naval Power there. Since then, in consequence of what has occurred at Zanzibar, it has been found necessary to send an ironclad to that station; and, in view of the increased Naval Forces of other Powers, it may be necessary to send more. In that case, there is no adequate dock accommodation for them between Malta and the Cape of Good Hope. I would venture to point out that this fact shows the importance of making some provision for our vessels at some point nearer to Zanzibar than is at present available.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—PRESERVATION OF FRONTAGES IN THE METROPOLIS.

QUESTION.

*EARL FORTESCUE, in rising to ask the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works whether it is the fact that, in spite of the unanimous opposition of the Vestry of St. Marylebone, the Metropolitan Board of Works has granted permission to the Samaritan Free Hospital to advance their frontage 12 feet on the Marylebone Road; and whether, if this is so, in view of the importance of preserving all open spaces in the Metropolis, and of the danger of one encroachment forming a precedent for others, the Board will not postpone action in the matter until it can be dealt with by the London County Council, said: My Lords, the Metropolitan Board, in a recent case gave two reasons for sanctioning a very similar encroachment, first, that there had been previous encroachments extending to the very next house, secondly, that the Vestry of St. Pancras was in favour of the encroachment. In this case the action of the Metropolitan Board, as set out in the Question which I have put on the Paper, is one that has throughout met with opposition from the Vestry of St. Marylebone and the ratepayers of the district. In a communication made to the Board by the Vestry so far back as the 4th October last, the Board was informed that the Vestry opposed the application by the Hospital for an advance of frontage, which was then to be 30, not 12 feet; yet on the 15th November, there having been in the meantime no further communications, the Board announced that they had consented to that advance. The opposition on the part of the Vestry was renewed. On January 31 the Metropolitan Board informed the Vestry that as the Hospital Authorities now asked for only an advance of 12 feet, they would take no further action in the matter. Upon that public meetings were held, at which resolutions condemnatory of the proposal were passed, and the Members for the borough were asked to bring in a Bill to prohibit the projection beyond the line of frontage. But on the 7th of March the Metropolitan Board finally confirmed its approval, though the London County Council had previously requested that Board to postpone granting permission to the Hospital for an advance of frontage. The land which the Board has thus given away is of considerable value, and therefore the action of the Board amounted, in effect, to making a donation from the public funds to this Hospital. Besides this, there is the consideration that the space reserved is infringed upon, and the contiguous property deprived of light and air. I beg to ask the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works whether it is yet too late to reconsider the matter; and whether the Board, which will in a very short time be superseded by the London County Council, will not leave the determination of such a matter as this to their successors?

*LORD MAGHERAMORNE: In answer to the Question of the noble Earl, the Metropolitan Board of Works have given their consent to the Samaritan Free Hospital bringing forward their frontage 12 ft. Perhaps your Lordships would like to know very shortly the facts of the case. In October last application was made to the Metropolitan Board of Works by the Committee of the Samaritan Free Hospital to advance their frontage about 30 ft. The matter was thoroughly gone into, and in consideration of what that Hospital had done, and what it was likely to do when the facilities for its good work was extended, the Board gave their consent to an advance of the frontage, not by 12 ft., but by 30 ft. There were many representations made, and the Committee of the Hospital came again into communication with the Metropolitan Board, when they showed their appreciation of the opinion and the wishes of the public; and after a long conference with the Metropolitan Board, instead of trying to go against public opinion, they said they would be very glad to bring in an amended plan. They did so, and asked only for 12 ft. advance, and that was an advance which only affected the gardens, which practically belonged to themselves. There was no infringement at all on the road, which is 50 ft. wide. I confess I was never more astonished in my life than when I heard all this tumult, and also the Question of the noble Earl. I think that the Metropolitan Board of Works have done their duty in giving their consent to that advance. I may

say, further, that the Metropoliton Board have the greatest possible respect for those who are coming after them; but if the noble Earl thinks that I am or that my colleagues are going to abrogate the position we hold, and to be afraid to carry out our duties as long as the Metropolitan Board exists, I must tell him that he is very much mistaken. We intend, as long as we have a duty to perform, to carry it out in the most thorough and efficient manner. We have done everything in our power in no way to infringe on the duties of the new County Council; and as I see my successor (Lord Rosebery) sitting opposite to me, I think that noble Earl will endorse the statement that we have shown every desire to avoid infringing in any shape or form on the functions of the County Council. But at the same time the Metropolitan Board intend to discharge the duties imposed on them, and I am not afraid, here or anywhere else, to defend my colleagues in what they have done or are doing. The noble Earl (Earl Fortescue) asks whether I and my colleagues will not postpone action in this matter? I and my colleagues have tried to act within the law. We took legal opinion, and we cannot make or recommend those to whom we have given permission to give it up. It was signed and passed by the Board, and whatever the County Council like to do they can do. I believe that they have sent a letter—I do not know what the letter is, or what was the answer to it—but the Committee of the Samaritan Free Hospital are acting on their rights if they come forward 12 ft. The Metropolitan Board cannot act against the legal advice that has been given them; and, as we shall die very soon, the County Council may take what steps they please in the matter.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I must confess that I know very little about the particular matter referred to in the Question of the noble Lord, but I must say that I have been very much struck by the doctrine enunciated by the noble Lord the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, which I must say does not accord with my view of what is the duty of a public body in the position now occupied by that Board. In my opinion, whenever a public body is so near extinction, it is bound, on a due consideration of the public interests, not to do any act that is not urgent, or that could, without public disadvantage be postponed. For instance, I may say that the magistrates of my own county, acting on that principle, have postponed a variety of things entirely within their jurisdiction until the County Council could deal with them, on the ground that, as a moribund body, it was not right for them to take too rigid a view of their duty, and do things of which their successors would not approve. If the matter was one which it was necessary should be decided without delay, and the public interests would suffer by its postponement, the Metropolitan Board of Works would be justified in their action; but I hope that they are not going, in these matters, to stand on their strict legal rights, and to think it a patriotic duty to exercise them fully to the very last day of their existence.

*LORD MAGHERAMORNE: Perhaps I may say, in reply, that this matter came forward first of all last September, so that it must not be accounted one of the things done by the Board on the very eve of its dissolution. The noble Earl who last spoke commenced with the observation that he did not know anything about this matter, and I must say that the observations that he has made show that he has not studied it in such a way that his comments upon it are of any advantage to your Lordships.

*EARL FORTESCUE: As I put this Question to the noble Lord, perhaps I may be permitted to say that, as the building operations of the Samaritan Hospital cannot commence till the spring, and the London County Council take over their jurisdiction on the 1st April, the notion that this is a pressing matter is really the most extraordinary view that even the Metropolitan Board has ever taken.

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 11th March, 1889.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON STANDING ORDERS.

Ordered, that the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of Thirteen Members.

Ordered, that Mr. Sydney Buxton be added to the Committee.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Ordered, That an Address be presented for Return, showing the Districts wherein Local Acts for the notification of Infectious diseases are in force in (1) England and Wales and (2) Scotland respectively; the Return to give in tabular form the name of the District, the Country in which the same is situate, the population of the District according to the Census of 1881, and the year in which the Act affecting the same was passed, with the total populations according to that Census of such Districts in (1) England and Wales, (2) Scotland, and (3) Great Britain respectively.—(*W. F. Powell.*)

ENDOWED SCHOOLS SCHEMES.

Ordered, That an Address be presented for Return of the Schemes submitted to the Education Department by the Charity Commissioners under the Endowed Schools Acts during the year 1883 and subsequent years, including 1889, up to the date of the Return, with the dates at which each Scheme was (1) sent to (2) approved by the Department, or otherwise dealt with (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 80, of Session, 1888.)

QUESTIONS.

COLONIAL MONEY ORDERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General if he could state the number of money orders and their value received from Australia and New Zealand last year; the like information regarding the United States; the like information regarding Canada; and the like information regarding South Africa, including the Cape and Natal.

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): The number and amount of money orders advised to this country in 1888 from the various parts of the world referred to by the hon. Member was as follows:—Australia and New Zealand—Number, 129,761; amount, £447,612. United States—Number, 391,662; amount, £1,041,948. Canada—Number, 78,340; amount, £207,667. South African Colonies — Number, 35,493, amount, £128,771. I must apologize to the House for thus often inflicting upon it such scraps of statistics as are required by the Hon. Member, and I would venture to suggest that public time would be saved if Questions of this sort were addressed to and answered by the Department.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON gave notice, in consequence of the answer, of his intention to move, on going into Committee of Supply, that an Intelligence Department be established in connection with the office of the Postmaster General.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS AT BELFAST.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Postmaster General whether he was aware that after the closing of the post and telegraph office in Waring Street, Belfast, it was found necessary to reopen a branch post office there; and whether, considering that the new general post office affords no convenience to the district of Waring Street for the despatch of telegrams, and that a telegraph office is more urgently required there than the post office, he will now take steps to have a telegraph office established in connection with this branch post office as soon as possible?

*MR. RAIKES: On a review of the whole case, I have decided that, as soon as arrangements can be made, telegraph business may again be transacted at Waring Street, as an experiment for one year, at the end of which time the matter will be reconsidered.

MR. CECIL ROCHE.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe), asked the Chief Secretary

to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, on Monday, 25th February, at Ennis, Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., sentenced Thomas Bermingham to two sentences of six months each, for assaults on two officers of the law occurring at the same time, during the struggle leading to his eviction.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am informed that Thomas Bermingham has been sentenced at Ennis to a term of six months' imprisonment for violently resisting the sheriff in the execution of his duty, and to a second term of six months for violently assaulting a police-constable on the same occasion. The man has appealed.

MR. J. ELLIS: Is the House to understand that if a man comes in collision with a dozen persons, and endeavours to defend himself and his property, he may be sent to prison for six years?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that question, but I believe that under the Act of 1882 there was a case in which a man got cumulative imimprisonment amounting to one year for sending threatening letters.

ARREST OF POLICE CONSTABLES.

MR. JOHN ELLIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, early in February, two police constables were arrested by District Inspector Brett, R.I.C., and by him charged with having cut the tail off a cow belonging to James Byrne, near Carron Burren, county Clare, and also damaging some hay belonging to him.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: District Inspector Brett reports that it is not the case that he either arrested two police constables or charged them as alleged in the question. James Byrne stated that his property was injured in the manner indicated, and that he was fired at on pursuing the persons. The constables were brought up at Petty Sessions on the charge of James Byrne that they had fired at him. The case was dismissed on the merits, the magistrates at the same time stating that the constables left the Court without the slightest stain on their characters, and that they considered Byrne's swearing to be of a most reckless description.

MR. J. ELLIS: Will the right hon. Gentleman give the name of the magistrate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not acquainted with it, but if the hon. Member will give notice of the Question I will ascertain.

EVICTION AT ABBEYFEALE.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it was true that in December, 1888, the Sheriff of Limerick, with a body of police under the command of Major Rolleston, R.M., visited the lands of Michael Moloney, of Abbeyfeale, and evicted him therefrom; under what colour of legal authority was this eviction carried out; were the facts as follow, namely, that, on 9th February, Molony was served with an eviction notice by his landlord, the Rev. Conyngham Ellis, of Cranbourne Vicarage, Windsor, for a year's rent, £21 17s. 6d., converting him into a caretaker; that, on 31st July, Moloney sent a cheque for the amount to the agent, R. D. O'Brien, 16, Mallow Street, Limerick, who sent a receipt for the rent due, dated 3rd August, and that this payment redeemed the lands, as the six months for redemption would not expire till 9th August; if so, upon what warrant did the sheriff act; was a magistrate's order for the eviction of a caretaker obtained under Section 86 of the Land Act, 1860, or was even a summons to show cause served on Moloney; upon whose requisition were the forces of the Crown supplied for the eviction, and what was the number and cost of the force; did Major Rolleston, R.M., or any official, take any trouble to ascertain whether the eviction was legal or illegal, or examine the sheriff's authority before setting out on the eviction expedition; did Moloney warn all concerned that his rent was paid and the land redeemed, and why did the authorities pay no attention to his protests, but insist on turning him out; and, if the Government were advised that the eviction was illegal, will they make the tenant any compensation for their share in the transaction?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said: Michael Moloney was one of several tenants evicted in December, 1888, a force of police being present at the requisition of the sheriff for his protection, but I am informed that the Resident Magistrate had

not arrived at the time of Moloney's eviction. Moloney stated at the time, and still alleges, that his rent was paid. If this is so, he has, of course, his remedy at law for any wrong he may have suffered. I understand that proceedings are threatened at the suit of Moloney against the sheriff and agent, and it would be therefore improper for me to enter into any discussion of the circumstances of the case.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Surely the right hon. Gentleman can say whether, as a matter of fact, before the forces of the Crown were supplied for the purpose of carrying out the eviction, the authorities took the trouble to ascertain whether the eviction was legal or illegal, or examine the Sheriff's authority before setting out on the eviction expedition?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As far as I know, the usual practice was followed. If the hon. and learned Gentleman desires further information, he should give notice of a Question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I only ask that the right hon. Gentleman shall answer the Question on the Paper, of which he has had notice for some days. I want to know by what authority the forces of the Crown were employed for an illegal purpose?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that the purpose was illegal, and I presume that the ordinary practice was followed.

MR. T. M. HEALY again read the Question upon the Paper, and remarked that it was clearly the duty of the right hon. Gentleman, for the performance of which he was paid a salary, to obtain the information that was necessary to enable him to answer the Questions of hon. Members.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND CATECHISM.

MR. COLMAN (Norwich) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the teaching of the Church of England Catechism was, or has hitherto been, included in the curriculum of the elementary school at Holme-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, the same being a Board school; whether a lately-appointed mistress of the school, on learning the fact, informed the School Board that she could not conscientiously give religious instruction except from the Bible, and that, if she were required to teach the Catechism, she would be obliged to give notice of resignation; whether the Board thereupon accepted her resignation; and, whether the Education Department will take steps to prevent the violation of the law by the further use of the Church Catechism?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir W. HART-DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I am informed that the teaching of the Church Catechism was for some time included in the religious instruction given at the School named, but without the knowledge of the School Board, who state that they left the matter in the hands of the teachers with the understanding that nothing should be taught in contravention of the Act. The Board's reason for accepting the late teacher's resignation was that she objected to the examination of the school by the diocesan inspector, and this practice, the Board—upon which there are two Nonconformists—were not disposed to abandon. The teaching of the Catechism has now been discontinued, and I do not think it will be necessary to take any further steps.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT, 1885.

MR. FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the complicated character of many provisions in "The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885," and the consequent difficulty of giving due effect to that important Statute, he will cause to be prepared and circulated among local authorities, in the course of the present Session, a memorandum explaining their powers and duties under the Act; and whether, if so, he will lay the document upon the Table of the House?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's-in-the-East): When the Housing of the Working Classes Act was passed the Local Government Board addressed circular letters to the several urban and rural sanitary authorities throughout England and Wales, directing their attention to the Act and explaining its provisions. I have no doubt that the authorities are fully aware of the powers which they possess under the Act referred to. If I

had reason to believe that it was not so, I should be quite prepared to act on the suggestion of my hon. Friend.

CITY OF LONDON VOLUNTEERS.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (University of London) asked the Secretary of State for War whether, in any re-organization of the Honourable Artillery Company, he could obtain for the City of London Volunteers (as successors of the London Train Bands), the right of drilling in the Artillery grounds?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): This question was fully discussed in 1873, and an opinion was given by the then Attorney General, the present Lord Coleridge, that, subject to the rights of the Commission of Lieutenancy and the Militia, the Honourable Artillery Company are entitled to the exclusive use of this ground. But, personally, I am entirely in sympathy with the object of my hon. Friend; and I think that if the Company could see their way to granting to the Volunteers of the City a reasonable use of their drill ground, they would render a service to the force, and would materially strengthen their own claim to public sympathy and support.

THE COMMISSARIAT.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton) asked the Secretary of State for War whether it is a fact that certain Officers of the late Commissariat, of many years' service, and of irreproachable character, have been passed over, and their places offered to young men of only a few months' departmental service; whether it is a fact that many of those officers not selected for the new corps have hitherto been officially reported upon most favourably; and whether he can state to what causes the rejection of these officers is due?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: It is quite incorrect that the places of any senior officers have been offered to young men of only a few months' departmental service. A vacant step in the rank of Colonel in the Army Service Corps has been filled by the selection from the next junior rank of the first officer in the list considered fitted and qualified for the position. This selection was made in accordance with custom, and the express provision of the Royal Warrant under which the old Commissariat and Transport Staff are now serving. Permanent appointments in the new Army Service Corps were offered to some 52 out of the 70 officers already seconded from their regiments for temporary service with the Commissariat and Transport Staff, and of that number only some 30 have accepted them; but the whole of the officers so serving have been given the option of continuing to serve with the Army Service Corps for the same period, and under the same conditions, as those of their original appointments to the corps. The number of permanent appointments offered was fixed with due regard to the best interests of the public service, and the rights of officers who were serving with the Commissariat and Transport Staff have been carefully guarded.

DRAINAGE CHARGES IN IRELAND.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Secretary to the Treasury: Is it true that, by the system of drainage charges put in force by the Board of Works, a landlord, named Christopher Reynolds, of Abbeylara, county Longford, has been deprived, without compensation, of the whole of the small property owned by him; is it the fact that, without giving Mr. Reynolds any previous notice of a charge, he was served in 1881 by the Board of Works with a final award for the Upper Inny Drainage, amounting to £20 15s. 6d. per annum, although the total Government valuation of the land is only £12 10s.; can any explanation of this levy be given, and of the failure to service notice of it on the owner; is there any precedent in the history of the Board of Works for a levy of nearly double the valuation for drainage of lands, and is this founded on their estimate of the improvement effected by the drainage; is he aware that the tenant of the lands went into the Land Court, and got the fair rent fixed against Mr. Reynolds at £20, and that the Chief Commissioners, on account of the drainage charge, raised the fair rent to £24, and expressed their amazement at the action of the Board of Works; did Mr. Reynolds, finding himself unable to get anything out of the land through drainage charge and taxes, leave payment of the charge go by default; did the Attorney Genera

thereupon proceed against him at suit of the Board of Works; is he aware that the County Court Judge expressed his regret at being compelled to make a decree in favour of the Board of Works, which must rob Mr. Reynolds of his little property; did the Board thereupon appoint Colonel Dopping as Receiver over the lands, and thereby deprive Mr. Reynolds of his only means of support; was this action by the Board sanctioned by the Government; and, what security will landlords or tenants have against similar treatment if the three Government Drainage Bills become law, and is it the Board of Works which would carry them into effect?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. W. JACKSON, Leeds, N): The drainage scheme in question was carried out with money advanced by Government by the Drainage Board of the district, consisting of local proprietors, and on its completion an award was made by the Board of Works under the Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Act, 1863, by which 62 acres 1 rood and 6 perches of the lands of Derragh, the property of Mr. C. Reynolds (and now in the possession of Peter Early, judicial tenant, at a rent of £24) was charged with £16 17s. 6d. per annum, to repay £337 10s. 8d., the proportion of expenditure due on his holding; (2) The annual instalment payable under award is £16 17s. 6d., none of which has been paid by Mr. Reynolds, though his tenant had paid him up to May 1887, and was processed for rent to May 1888; (3) The Board was compelled by the Act, on the completion of the works, to make the award, and they published the requisite notices of lodgment of draft award; (4) The award is not founded on the Board's Estimate of the improvements effected by the Drainage, but on the sum expended by the Drainage Board under the supervision of their own Engineer. The original Estimate made by the Proprietors for the entire district was £41,691 12s. 2d., while the actual expenditure, including interest, was £86,553 12s.; (5) The County Court Judge fixed the rent at £20, which the Commissioners increased on appeal to £24. The Board are not aware of any expression of opinion made by the Land Commissioners; (6) Mr. Reynolds paid the Board nothing; (7) Decrees were, therefore, taken out in the County Courts, and Returns of *nulla bona* made. The Board had no option then but to proceed for a Receiver and sale; (8) There is no record of any such statement being made, a decree could not affect the property; (9) and (10) Colonel Dopping as a District Receiver was appointed by the Law Judge; (11) The drainage of the district was, as I have already explained, carried out, not by the Board of Works, but by the proprietors in the district. The Barrow and Bann Drainages will be carried out by a Board locally elected. The Shannon works alone will be carried out by the Board of Works, the charges to be imposed being primarily assented to by all who have to pay them.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I gather that the substance of the answers is that a particular landlord has had his property confiscated for no fault of his own, and that the Government do not intend to grant any compensation.

*MR. JACKSON: The Board of Works have simply carried out a duty imposed upon them by Act of Parliament.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the hon. Gentleman is unable to say that the Treasury will make compensation, I beg to give notice that I will call attention to the extraordinary facts of this case upon the Vote for the Board of Works.

THE OLPHER EVICTIONS.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it was true that the Government have changed to County Fermanagh the venue of the prisoners charged with resisting eviction on the Olphert Estate in Donegal; had the Crown served notice on the Sheriff for a panel of 200 special jurors; was it the case that the special juror class in Fermanagh is so limited, that out of a population of 84,879 persons only 212, according to the 1887 Return, are special jurors in that county; and was it true that all the prisoners are Gaelic-speaking Catholics, and that there is no Catholic on the special jury panel, while a large number of the special jurors are Orangemen, and many are landlords and agents?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The reply to the inquiry in the first paragraph is in

the affirmative. A notice was served on the Sheriff for a panel of all the special jurors in Fermanagh. The figures appear to be substantially as stated in third paragraph. I have no information as to the language or religion of the persons charged, or as to the politics, religion, or avocation of the special jurors.

CULLINANE, THE INFORMER.

MR. COX (Clare, E.), asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Cullinane, the informer, is till within the jurisdiction of Her Majesty's Government; if not, on what date he left the country; from what source he obtained the money to take him out of the country; where he was last residing before he left; and whether the police authorities can furnish any information as to his present whereabouts?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must decline to answer any questions of this character across the floor of the House with regard to the movements of informers. I have already told the House that I do not know where Cullinane is. If I did know I should not say.

MR. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the charge in this case is that Cullinane organized the commission of outrages which were charged against the National League before the Royal Commission and elsewhere; and, whether, as the right hon. Gentleman has promised facilities to all parties before the Commission, and has given facilities to the *Times*, by placing in the hands of an informer documents of State, he will give information as to when Cullinane left the country, where he went, and whether the money which enabled him to go was provided by his employers out of the public purse?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not propose to answer the highly argumentative question of the hon. Member. If information of that sort is desired from the Government, it should be applied for in the ordinary way.

MR. COX: What is the ordinary way?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: To write a letter to the Irish Government and sign it.

ST. PANCRAS BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the following case—Boothby *v.* Robinson and others—an action tried before His Honour Judge Stonor and a special jury at the Marylebone County Court, on Tuesday, 5th March, the facts as reported by the Press being as follows:—The Plaintiff was ordered by the St. Pancras Poor Law Guardians to pay for his wife's maintenance, which he declined to do, on the ground that the wife had failed in her covenant—

> "He was then ordered to be detained until the money was paid, was taken to the casual ward, and an attempt was made to undress him for the purposes of a bath. Seeing the filthy state of the casual inmates the Plaintiff declined, though this cost him a severe struggle with the attendants. Ultimately, after being detained about eight hours, he paid a portion of the money, and was released without any explanation. Plaintiff had lost his situation through this act of the Guardians. His Honour, in addressing the Jury, drew attention to the high-handed manner in which Plaintiff had been treated. The Jury retired, and returned almost immediately with a verdict for Plaintiff, damages £100. Because the case had been remitted from a Superior Court, costs on the scale of the High Court were allowed;"

and whether he will issue instructions to prevent such proceedings by Boards of Guardians in future?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have communicated with the Guardians of St. Pancras, and it appears that the main facts stated in the Question are substantially correct. The detention was obviously illegal, and the result of the action against the Guardians, with a verdict of £100 damages, I think is likely to be much more effective than any suggestion which might be made by the Local Government Board.

PRISON CHAPLAINS AND SURGEONS.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether, having regard to the undertaking given by him on 15th November, 1888, that the question of the disproportion of salaries of the prison chaplains and surgeons in England and Scotland respectively should be considered before February, he can now state what steps, if any, Her Majesty's Government are going to take with a view to adjust this matter?

*MR. JACKSON: In accordance with my undertaking, I have examined this question in connection with the Scotch

Prison Estimates for the next financial year. The conclusion that I came to was no case had been made out for raising the pay of the Scotch prison chaplains, but I propose to invite the Secretary of State to consider whether the English rates should not be revised. There is, on the whole, very little inequality between the salaries paid to the Scotch surgeons and those paid in England, and the only case that appeared to me to require revision was that of the surgeon at Barlinnie, whose scale will be improved.

MINING LOCK OUT.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the lock-out of 60 miners at Busbyhead Pit, near Crosshouse, for refusing to sign a scale of deductions proposed by the manager; whether the workmen offered to submit the proposed scale to arbitration, as provided in Clause 12 of the Coal Mines Act; whether the manager refused this and all similar proposals; and, whether this is a breach of Section 12 of the Coal Mines Act.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I have obtained a Report from the Inspector on this matter. I am informed by him that it was the manager, and not the men, who wished to submit the proposed scale to a neutral person mutually chosen, but this the men would not agree to. The owners thereupon drew up a scale of deductions, and intimated to the miners that each man must sign it before being allowed to work. The men refused to sign this agreement, and have not been at work since the 27th ult. I cannot see that there has been any breach of the Act.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether since last Session the Secretary of State for the Colonies has proceeded any further with negotiations for the establishment of responsible government in Western Australia, and the transfer to the handful of white Colonists there of the control over the lands in the temperate part of the Colony, which are the only temperate lands now under the control of the British Government for the purpose of colonization?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): The Bill has been read a second time in the Legislative Council of the Colony, and a General Election has since taken place; but, as the hon. Member was informed at the end of last Session, legislation in this country must take place before responsible government can be established in Western Australia, and I can add nothing to the previous answers given in the House.

A LENIENT SENTENCE.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, at Manchester Assizes on 4th March, John Matthews was convicted of manslaughter (the killing his wife by a kick); whether John Matthews had been previously convicted 23 times, three of these convictions being for assaults on the woman he killed; whether the said John Matthews was sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour; and whether he will lay upon the Table the record of these various convictions?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir, this prisoner was convicted as stated. I have not at present the particulars of his previous convictions, but I am informed by the Clerk of Assize that there was a long list of previous convictions against him, and that he had been two or three times convicted of assaulting his wife. The jury after a long deliberation accompanied their verdict of manslaughter with a strong recommendation to mercy, on the ground that they did not think any serious mischief was contemplated. He had kicked his wife on her leg, which had varicose veins, one of which was ruptured, and she bled to death. The Judge acted on the view of the jury, and punished the prisoner for the mere assault. I do not think any useful purpose would be served by laying the prisoner's record on the Table of the House.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Is it the fact that the jury who recommended this man to mercy necessarily knew nothing of his previous convictions, which were only before the Judge, and that one of those convictions was for an assault upon

his wife, for which he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment?

MR. MATTHEWS: I told the hon. Gentleman that I have no information in regard to the previous convictions.

THE SUBMARINE CABLE COMPANY.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway) asked the Postmaster General, whether the staff of the Submarine Cable Company are to be placed upon the established staff of the Central Telegraphic Office; and, if so, as the maximum of a telegraphist in the Submarine service is £150 per annum, whether the Submarine Officers in receipt of their maximum will be placed upon the minimum scale of the senior clerks of the Central Telegraph Office (£150 to £190), to the detriment of the telegraphists of the first class of the Central Telegraph Office, many of whom have already been waiting two years for promotion from the maximum of their class £140; and will he take such steps as will prevent any injustice being done to officers who have been many years on the establishment?

*MR. RAIKES: In reply to the hon. Member all that I can say is that in any arrangements that may be made for the transfer to the Post Office of the staff of the Submarine Telegraph Company care will be taken to prevent injustice being done to officers already in the service of the Department.

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TELEGRAPHS.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN (Westmeath S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India when Sir Albert Cappel, who completed his five years tenure of office as Director General of Telegraphs on the 14th June, 1888, will be required to vacate that appointment; and whether Colonel Molloch, the officiating Director General, will revert to military duty on attaining the age of 55 years next April, in accordance with the usual practice?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): Sir Albert Cappel, who is on leave, will vacate his appointment in March, 1890, up to which date he is entitled to furlough. Colonel Malloch will vacate his appointment in April, 1890.

IRISH EDUCATION OFFICE.

MR. DONAL SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is a fact that the Irish Education Office is the only Department of the Civil Service in Ireland where the system of fining clerks for late attendance is carried out; if so, will he state upon what grounds are those clerks subjected to this exceptional practice; and whether he will give directions to discontinue the system?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe the fact is as stated. I understand the practice has been approved by the Treasury, and has been in force in the Department for a very long period. I will communicate with the heads of the Department on the subject.

THE ATHY UNION.

MR. LEAHY (Kildare, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board of Ireland have yet come to the decision of ordering an election of Guardians for the Athy Union, in accordance with the wishes of the ratepayers; and, if so, when will the notice be issued?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No decision on the subject of restoring the elected Guardians in Athy Union has yet been come to; but the matter will be taken into consideration towards the end of the present month. The elected Board can be restored at any time, and passing by the General Election (held annually on 25th March) does not necessarily keep them out of office till March, 1890.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask whether the object of delaying the reconstitution of this Board of Guardians is to prevent the giving of out door relief?

There was no reply.

EMPLOYMENT OF CARMEN.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether, owing to the great loss the present short hours entail on carmen and others, he will cause to be altered the time of opening and keeping open of the docks and other bonded warehouses from eight o'clock a.m. until six o'clock p.m. in summer, and from nine o'clock a.m. until six o'clock p.m. in winter?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): I have had no notice of the Question, and am therefore unable to answer it.

COUNTY COURT JUDGE BISHOP.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been called to the strictures made by Lord Coleridge on the conduct of County Court Judge Bishop in not entering the verdict as given in writing by the jury in the case of the Rev. Richard Jones *versus* Roberts and others, which was heard on appeal on 17th December, 1888, before Lord Coleridge and Mr. Justice Manisty; and whether the Lord Chancellor has taken any action in the matter?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Lord Chancellor that the proceedings in the case before Judge Bishop have been submitted for his consideration. The learned Judge seems to have come to a conclusion, erroneous in point of law, but which, if it were sound, would have made the findings of the jury immaterial. After careful consideration the Lord Chancellor cannot find anything in the case calling for his interference, which, as the hon. Member is aware, is only applicable where a Judge has been guilty of misconduct.

MR. T. ELLIS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to lay on the Table the shorthand notes of the remarks of the Lord Chief Justice?

MR. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; that would be an extremely unusual course.

COAL WEIGHING.

MR. SPENCER BALFOUR (Burnley) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been directed to the decision, given on Wednesday last by the Queen's Bench Division, affirming that the exemption granted by the Home Secretary under the Act of 1872 from the provision that coal should be weighed where the amount of wages depended upon the quantity of mineral got, was valid under the Act of 1887; and, as to what course he proposes to take in view of such decision?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have seen the decision in question. Before taking any active steps I shall consider the representations of the parties interested, whether employers or employed. I may say that the inclination of my opinion is that all weighing exemptions inconsistent with the Act of 1887 should be revoked, unless the workmen as well as the employers desire their continuance.

THE NAVAL PROGRAMME.

MR. DUFF (Banffshire) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty if he would state the number of guns above nine inches diameter that will be required to complete the armament of the vessels proposed to be built under the new programme of naval defence?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The number of guns above 9 in. in diameter that will be required for the armament of vessels proposed under the new programme is as follows:—13½ in., 67 tons, 32; 10 in., 29 tons, 8; 9·2 in., 22 tons, 18—total, 38. This is independent of the reserve, which is in the proportion of one-eighth to the armament afloat.

RAILWAY SHUNTING.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the danger to life and limb reported in the Official Returns (General Report to Board of Trade, C. 5174, for 1887) incurred by railway shunters; that, in the year 1887, 124 were killed, and 1,207 injured, in the various shunting operations of railway service; that, in the 10 years ended 1887, the casualities in shunting amounted to 1,180 killed, and 12,459 wounded, and that, out of a staff of 6,261 men engaged in coupling and uncoupling vehicles, 3,594 had been killed or injured, whereas in the United States, since the compulsory adoption of automatic couplings by Act of Congress, dated 4th May, 1884, according to published Returns, there have only been 5 men killed for every 100 in the United Kingdom; and whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a Bill this Session to mitigate the dangers to which railway shunters are unnecessarily exposed?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS-BEACH,

Bristol, W.): The figures quoted by the hon. Member are not quite accurate, and the number of railway servants killed or injured in coupling or uncoupling vehicles must not be compared with the total of a staff of 6,261 men, as some servants besides shunters are employed for that purpose. I do not know to what returns the hon. Member refers as to similar accidents in the United States. As at present advised, I do not think it would be possible to compel the adoption of automatic couplings by Act of Parliament, but I am now endeavouring to obtain information on the various systems adopted, with a view to early legislation on the subject.

EMIGRATION FROM IRELAND.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to an article in the *Nineteenth Century* by Mr. James Hack Tuke, giving a highly satisfactory account of the emigrants who left Mayo, Galway, and Donegal under his auspices in the year 1882-4; whether Mr. Tuke was right in saying that the cessation of family emigration from the congested districts in Ireland is not due to want of funds, there being a balance not far short of £20,000 of the grant voted by Parliament still untouched; and whether in view of the statement by Mr. Tuke that he is in receipt of "very numerous applications" for assistance from the congested districts, there are any reasons for withholding from him the money voted by Parliament for that purpose?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to my hon. Friend I have to state that the unexpended balance is £18,000. I am firmly convinced of the advantage, both to those who go and those who stay, of emigration from the congested districts of Ireland; and I should gladly avail myself of any aid Mr. Tuke can give me in carrying out the intentions of the Act of Parliament.

THE LIMERICK GUARDIANS.

MR. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Drury, Local Government Auditor, recently surcharged three of the Limerick Guardians the sum of £9 1s. 6d.; whether this surcharge is the result of an order made by the Limerick Guardians nearly two years ago directing Mr. John Ryan, solicitor to the Board, to take the necessary legal steps to prosecute 12 armed policemen who invaded the Limerick Workhouse grounds and who refused to leave when ordered to do so by the Guardians; whether the order directed Mr. Ryan to engage special counsel; whether he is aware that Mr. Ryan's bill of costs was taxed, and only reduced by £1, and that Mr. Ryan was obliged to engage special counsel at a fee of £20, and whether that was the exact fee paid by the Government to Mr. Carson in all prosecutions under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; and whether the powers of an auditor are limited to ascertaining whether any order of a Board of Guardians involving expenditure is illegal or not; and, if not illegal, whether the expenditure is in excess of what ought to be paid?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The facts are as stated in the first paragraph, with the exception that the amount surcharged was £9 6s. 6d. The surcharge was in connection with a resolution adopted by the Board of Guardians in October, 1887, for the prosecution of a party of police for entering the workhouse grounds and refusing to leave. This attendance of the police was, it appears, in consequence of a request made by one of the Guardians, a magistrate, and that police protection had been afforded at previous meetings at the desire of the Guardians themselves. The direction was that the solicitor employ counsel as he may deem fit in the case. The case came before Petty Sessions, and the sergeant in command was fined one farthing for trespass. The original bill of costs was not taxed; but a second one was prepared and submitted to taxation by Mr. Ryan, which, however, the auditor felt himself unable to recognize. The auditor reduced the fee from 20 guineas to 15 guineas, and likewise made some other disallowances to the amount of £4 1s. 6d. I understand that no fixed fee is paid to Mr. Carson, the amount being measured according to the magnitude of the case. The auditor has full power to strike out all charges he may deem illegal or unfounded, and also reduce such as he may deem to be exorbitant.

CAPPOQUIN PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether cases entered for hearing at Cappoquin Petty Sessions on 24th January, and requiring the attendance of two magistrates, were adjourned to 7th February as only one magistrate attended; (2) whether, on 7th February, such case were again adjourned to 21st February as only one magistrate attended; (3) whether, on 21st February, another adjournment again took place for the same reason; (4) what prevented the Resident Magistrate attending Cappoquin ordinary Petty Sessions on the days in question; (5) and, whether any steps can be taken to prevent the inconveniences to professional gentlemen and their clients that follow such adjournments?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The facts are as stated in the first three paragraphs. The district Resident Magistrate was unable to attend on any of the occasions in question owing to his having been engaged on other duties.

THE HIGHLAND LAND LEAGUE.

DR. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a recent criminal trial at Stornoway, against Mr. Donald MacRae, schoolmaster of Balallan, and others, for the expulsion of intruders from a meeting of the Highland Land League, after notice had been given to the said intruders to retire; whether the Sheriff dismissed the complaint as unfounded, and characterized the alleged offence as unknown to the law of Scotland; whether the Procurator Fiscal, or his deputy, at whose instance the complaint was raised, are agents for Lady Matheson, the proprietrix of the Island; whether, in view of the fact that the complaint was instituted either from ignorance of the law or otherwise, any notice has been taken of the conduct of the Procurator Fiscal or his deputy; and, whether, as the machinery of the Criminal Court has been improperly set in motion, it is intended to make any compensation or redress to Mr. MacRae and the other defendants?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Bute): The persons mentioned in the question of the hon. Gentleman were tried summarily on a charge of assaulting a man in Balallan School by seizing hold of and compressing his throat, to the effusion of blood and injury of the person, and tearing his coat and forcibly ejecting him from the school. The Sheriff did not characterize the offence thus alleged as unknown to the law of Scotland, and such a decision would have been manifestly untenable. The accused were acquitted on the ground that the evidence did not sustain the charge. The man alleged to have been injured had declined to withdraw from a meeting which had desired him to do so, and the evidence related to the degree of pressure with which that request was enforced. The case had been reported to the Fiscal by the police in the usual way. The Procurator Fiscal and his deputy are in partnership as solicitors, and I am informed that they are sometimes employed professionally by Lady Matheson, as well as by other residents in the district, including one of the persons prosecuted on this occasion. The assumptions upon which the last two questions rest being incorrect, no action is called for in either of the directions suggested.

IRISH CESSPAYERS AND GRAND JURIES.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the evidence given before the committee of the grand jury of the county of Antrim, wherein it is clearly shown that an exorbitant rate is charged for the collection of the county cess, although competent men with ample security are willing to collect it for half the amount; and whether he will urge upon the Government the advisability of entertaining at an early date a measure to put an end to the present anomalous system which prevails in Ireland whereby the cesspayers are almost entirely unrepresented on the grand jury?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no direct knowledge of the evidence referred to by the hon. Member, inasmuch as the action of grand juries in Ireland in regard to the appointment of cess collectors is in no wise under the control of the Executive Government. Having, however, caused the question to be brought before the secretary to the

grand jury of the county Antrim for any observations he might desire to offer, he informs me that the grand jury committee heard several cesspayers, who gave their opinion that the poundage rate of 9d. is to much too pay for collection of cess, and that 4d. or 6d. would be quite enough. The committee are to report to the grand jury at Spring Assizes. The secretary adds that the Act allows payment up to 1s., and that 9d. has been paid in the county up to the present. With regard to the second paragraph, I am quite aware that the existing system of grand juries is anomalous, but among the many arguments of weight which might be urged for its alteration I have never heard that the promotion of economy in local expenditure was one.

POLICE AT THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what purpose, and by whose authority, was a large number of the Metropolitan Police employed both inside and outside the Royal College of Surgeons on the afternoon of the 28th ult?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that from information received at Scotland Yard there was some reason to apprehend disturbance at a meeting to be held at the College. The usual precautions under such circumstances were directed—namely, the placing of a few patrols in the vicinity to prevent any disorder which might arise. The superintendent, however, misconceived his instructions, and, contrary to usual practice, placed a force of men inside the building. He has been informed that he was wrong in so doing.

SIR GUYER HUNTER: May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that on the morning of the occurrence the police were placed inside and outside the building after Mr. Costello, the Counsel for the Association of the members of the College of Surgeons, had given an assurance to Mr. Justice Stirling that he would make use of no other than legal means to obtain their rights?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have had no communication to that effect from Mr. Justice Stirling.

ENGINEER STUDENTS.

BARON DIMSDALE (Herts, Hitchin): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the number of Engineer Students at present under training is much less than usual; and whether, in view of the contemplated increase in our naval strength, it is the intention of the Admiralty to increase the number of admissions of Engineer Students this year?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes; there has been a reduction, as it is proposed to transfer certain of the work hitherto done by engineer officers to engine-room artificers. This year there will be, for the first time, entries from outside into this branch of the Service; I do not propose, therefore, until I know the result of this change, to make any addition to the number of students trained at Government expense.

WORK IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES.

MR. CAINE (Barrow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is a fact that it is intended to bring the seven hours' system into operation in the Statistical Department of the Customs on April 1 next; and whether it is correctly understood that the majority of the lower division clerks at present employed there will in consequence be tranferred as far as possible to other offices?

*MR. JACKSON: It is intended to bring the seven hours' system into partial operation in the Statistical Office of the Customs, but the date on which the change is to be made has not yet been fixed. As a result of the new system a few clerks of the lower division, but not the majority, at present employed in that office, will be returned to the Civil Service Commission for employment in other offices. I may point out that where the seven hours is applied, and lower division clerks get additional pay for the additional hours, we expect a corresponding reduction in the number, otherwise the seven hours would involve considerably increased expenditure.

THE REPORTED NAVAL ACTION AT SAMOA.

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any news

has reached the Government as to a conflict between German and American war ships at Samoa?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have received no such information, and the report in question is entirely discredited.

THE NAVAL PROGRAMME.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state approximately what percentage of the additional expenditure proposed so as to strengthen the naval defences will be spent in contracts to private firms in this country?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Roughly speaking, about 75 per cent of the estimated expenditure on the 70 new vessels, exclusive of their armaments and ordnance, will be spent in contracts with the private trade of this country. As regards the armament and ordnance it is at present difficult to say with precision what proportion will go to private trade and to the Royal Gun Factories, as the allocation has not yet been made, but a large proportion of this expenditure will be spent in contracts with private firms.

INCREASE OF RAILWAY RATES.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware if it is a fact, as stated at a recent meeting of traders and merchants at Paisley, that since the passing of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, railway companies, in some instances, have increased their rates 30 to 40 per cent by re-classification; and, whether there is any power under the new Act to prevent railway companies thus increasing their rates, and compelling traders to resort to the troublesome and expensive procedure set forth in the Act, so as to place them on the same footing as formerly?

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I think the hon. Member might have referred to the provisions of the Act of last Session before putting these Questions. He will find in the 24th clause that the railway companies have to submit a fresh classification and schedule of rates to the Board of Trade, separating in the latter the terminal charges from the *maximum* rates, and stating distinctly what the terminal charges are for. No doubt, in a re-classification of the kind mentioned, rates may be made higher on some articles, just as lower rates may be charged on others; but the new classification of rates cannot come into force until they have been sanctioned by the Board of Trade and by Parliament. I shall be quite prepared to consider any applications that may be made to me for an extension of time to send in objections to the new classification and schedule of rates; but if that time is extended, it will be impossible for any Provisional Orders in the matter to become law during the present Session.

DEFENCE OF A PROCURATOR FISCAL.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any payment of public money has been made to Mr. M'Lennon, Procurator Fiscal of the Skye district, in respect of expenses incurred by him in defending the action "Macpherson *v.* M'Lennon," raised and decided under circumstances precisely similar to those existing in the case of "Beaton *v.* Ivory"; if so, what sum was paid Mr. M'Lennon; and did the Government, before paying him, inquire whether he had applied to the pursuer's agent for his taxed costs?

*MR. JACKSON: A sum of £59 8s. 11d. was paid Mr. M'Lennon in respect of expenses incurred by him in the defence of the action in question. Payment was made on the usual certificate from the Lord Advocate that the expenses were incurred under his directions, and ought to be paid from public funds. It cannot be ascertained without further inquiry whether any application was made to the pursuer for payment of the taxed costs; but it is believed that no such inquiry was made.

DR. CAMERON: When was the payment made, and ont of what fund did it come?

*MR. JACKSON: No mention of the date is made in the Question. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will put down another Question on the point.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as the representative of the Metropolitan Board of Works, whether the engineer

and the clerk of that Board have tendered their resignations; if so, upon what grounds; what were their salaries at the time of their resignations; whether their resignations have been accepted; whether pensions have been granted to them by the Board; if so, under what statutory authority; and what is the amount of the pensions? I likewise wish ask whether the Board have also accepted the resignation of Mr. Thomas Lovick, the assistant engineer, and granted him a pension of £666 per annum; and whether applications to resign upon pension have been received from six other officers of the Board, and what is the attitude of the Board towards these last applications?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford): The engineer and clerk of the Metropolitan Board have tendered their resignations on the ground of old age, both being in their 70th year. The salary of the engineer at the time of his resignation was £2,000, and that of the clerk £1,000 per annum. The resignations have been accepted by the Board, and pensions have been granted to the officers of the Board in the engineer's case of £1,333 6s. 8d., and in the clerk's case of £666 13s. 4d. per annum, being two-thirds of their present salary. The powers under which the Board acted in these cases are those conferred by Section 213 of the Metropolis Local Management Act, 1855, the officers in question having been in the service of the Metropolitan Commissioners of Sewers before the constitution of the Board, but the Board also possesses powers to confer pensions under the Act passed in 1866 to provide for superannuation allowances to officers of the Vestries, and other Boards within the area of the Metropolis Local Management Act. A pension of £666 13s. 4d. has been granted to Mr. Lovick, the Assistant Engineer referred to by the hon. Member, and I shall be happy to hand him a copy of the formal resolution of the Board, which is too long for me to read to the House. I have only to add that the remaining officers mentioned by the hon. Member have requested permission to resign, and their cases are now before a Committee of the Board. The other officers who have resigned are—Mr. T. Lovick, assistant engineer, aged 65, whose length of service is upwards of 40 years; Mr. H. R. Morley, engineer's clerk, aged 60 years, length of service nearly 36 years; Mr. T. Gunyon, superintending draftsman, aged 62, upwards of 40 years' service; Mr. J. M'Dougall, aged 66, upwards of 40 years' service; Mr. James Bell, draftsman, aged 63, upwards of 40 years' service; Mr. A. Mott, assistant surveyor in the architects' department, aged 65, upwards of 33 years' service; Mr. C. Y. Norwood, first-class assistant, architects' department, aged 64, upwards of 34 years' service. The attitude of the Board is that they will do their duty.

POLICE CELL ACCOMMODATION.

MR. FISHER (Fulham): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works how it is that the large sum of money voted by the House for the purpose of providing additional cells and other accommodation at the Hammersmith Police Court has not yet been expended, and whether he can give some satisfactory assurance that there will be no further delay in carrying out the necessary works?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET, Dublin University): It was not possible to begin spending the money voted in last year's Estimates for Hammersmith Police Court until the Home Secretary had had time fully to consider the Report of Mr. Justice Wills's Committee on the accommodation of prisoners in the London Police Courts. The preparation of the plans was also somewhat delayed by the applications of the magistrates for better offices. When these questions were settled we found it impossible to frame plans which would meet all requirements within the Estimate, and we had to appeal to the Treasury on the subject, but I hope we are now at the end of our difficulties, and that the works will be forthwith begun.

FARM SERVANTS AND COUNTY COUNCILS.

SIR E. GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the overseers in some of the districts of Northumberland have decided that the farm servants are not entitled

to vote for county councillors; whether he has declared that it is the intention of the Local Government Act to place such persons on the Register; and what steps the Government will take to remedy this omission?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have not declared that it was the intention of the Local Government Act that farm servants, as such, without reference to the circumstances, should be placed on the Register of Voters. It is obvious that the question as to the right of any farm servant in this matter must depend upon the actual facts in the particular case.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): Is it not a fact that in answer to a question as to whether a workman living in a house belonging to his employer, the occupation of which is counted as part of his wages, was entitled to vote, the right hon. Gentleman said that such a workman would be so entitled.

*MR. RITCHIE: The answer on this point which I previously gave to the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division was that if a labourer is not required to reside for the purposes of his service, but merely has the cottage as part of his wages, he would, in my opinion, be entitled to be registered as a voter under the County Electors Act.

IRISH LACE MANUFACTURE.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he will be so good as at once to communicate with the Irish Government in Dublin, to whom applications have been addressed for Mr. A. Cole to visit the lace making centres this month, in order that the visits may be paid without further delay?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: I shall be glad to make any communications to the Irish Government that may facilitate this work in Ireland.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLMASTERS.

MR. DILLWYN (for Mr. CONYBEARE): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, whether it is permissible for head masters of elementary schools receiving Government grants to act in the capacity of paid registration agents to Parliamentary candidates?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: The principal teacher is not allowed to undertake duties not connected with the school which occupy any part whatever of the school hours or of the time appointed for the special instruction of pupil teachers; but beyond these limits it is not for the Department to determine how he may employ his spare time.

THE REV. FATHER CLARKE.

MR. W. CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the fact that a number of prisoners convicted of disgraceful crimes, pickpockets, burglars, and others, have been transferred from Dublin to Wexford, and is it intended to require the Rev. Father Clarke to take exercise in the same yard and at the same time with such criminals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certain prisoners convicted of larceny and other crimes have, in ordinary course, been transferred from Dublin to Wexford Prison. Two of the prisoners so transferred having been convicted for the first time, one for "false pretences" and the other for "assault police," are such as the Rev. Mr. Clarke was ordered to exercise with. He has not been, and would not be, required to exercise with the prisoners convicted of larceny, who were transferred from Dublin (inasmuch as it appears they had all been convicted before), nor with any habitual criminals. As a matter of fact, the Governor reports that "the Rev. Mr. Clarke was exercised by himself on the medical officer's recommendation previous to his removal to hospital, where he now exercises alone."

MR. W. REDMOND: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that there are different classes for exercise?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand from the answer supplied to me by the Prisons Board that there is a distinction made between persons convicted for the first time and those persons properly described as habitual criminals.

MR. W. REDMOND: But is it not a fact that in this prison there is only one yard, and that all prisoners are required to exercise at the same time, no matter what their class? Is it not a fact that when I was in that prison I was called upon to exercise with habi-

tual criminals of every kind, to exercise, for instance, with persons guilty of garotting, and with two soldiers, who having deserted, were convicted of committing several burglaries?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asks me whether there is only one yard. I cannot answer that without notice. He also asks whether it is the case that prisoners exercise at different times. I gather from the answer supplied me that that is the case. It appears that rev. gentlemen are exercised alone. It also appears that there is a distinction between persons convicted more than once and persons convicted for the first time.

MR. W. REDMOND: Does the right hon. Gentleman state definitely that different classes of prisoners are exercised at different times? Such is quite contrary to my experience.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is a little unreasonable. I have given him all information in my power. If he desires further information and will put down a Question I will do my best to answer it.

DENBIGHSHIRE CHARITIES.

MR. T. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland, as one of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, when the Report of the Assistant Commissioner appointed to inquire into the charities of Denbighshire will be issued; and when a similar inquiry into the charities of other counties will be instituted?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: It is not proposed to issue the Report on any one parish until the work of inquiring into all the parishes in the county of Denbigh is completed. It is not expected that this work will be completed before several months. The Commissioners have not at present been furnished by the Treasury with the requisite authority for such an expenditure as would be necessary for the purpose of holding similar inquiries into the charities of other counties.

THE WELSH LANGUAGE.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether, having regard to the saving provisoes in the first section of the Statute Law Revision Act, 1887, the repeal by that Act of the 20th section of 21 Henry VIII., imposing certain disabilities on persons who use the Welsh language extends to disabilities incurred before the Act was passed; and, if not, whether he will take steps to extend that repeal to such last-mentioned disabilities?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): I gather from the Question of the right hon. Gentleman that he is under a misapprehension. The section to which he refers is, in fact, section 17 of the Act 27 Henry VIII., cap. 26. It is not repealed, and if he will refer to the Statute Law Revision Act, 1887, and the revised edition of the Statutes there referred to, he will find this section printed at length. The mistake arises from the section being numbered 20 in some editions of the Statutes. I understand, with reference to questions which have been put to me upon this matter, that the formal proceedings of coroners' courts, municipal corporations, and other public bodies in Wales have been and are recorded in English; and, as I have already said, no difficulty has arisen from the necessity of occasional interpretation.

IRELAND—THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the statements made by certain prisoners as to temptations held out to them by policemen, prison officials, and others, to induce them to concoct false evidence against Members of this House and others, he will afford a suitable opportunity for examining into the truth of these allegations—viz., by a public investigation upon oath?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no ground for believing that these statements, if they have been made, are otherwise than false and malicious. Any witness examined before the Commission can, I suppose, be cross-examined on oath in respect to these charges. If there has been any conspiracy of the kind indicated, it can be punished under the ordinary law.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether he expects

us to look on calmly while the Government are carrying on their conspiracy against us?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether District Inspector Newall, of Tralee, has been in attendance at the Commission Court for several months, was only examined on 28th January, and is still here in constant communication with the *Times* solicitor; whether Sergeant Faucett, of Cork; Head Constable Stretton, of Listowel; and Acting Sergeant C. O'Brien, of Tralee, were examined before the Christmas Adjournment, but are still here, and in constant communication with Mr. Soames; whether Constable Kenny, Listowel, has been for months attending the Commission in plain clothes, but has never been called, and is in constant communication with Mr. Soames; whether Sergeant Clark, of Tralee, was examined on 13th December and is still here; whether Superintendent Mallon, of Dublin, has been here since the Commission began, or for several months, and has never been called; whether District Inspector Webb, Kilkenny, came over shortly after the Commission opened, and was only examined on 6th March to prove arrest of Mr. W. Redmond, being meanwhile in constant communication with Mr. Soames; Detective Sergeant Humphreys, of Queenstown, was brought over, kept here for several weeks, never examined, and only allowed to return a few days ago after several consultations with Mr. Soames; whether eight Royal Irish Constabulary men in uniform, ten Royal Irish Constabulary men in plain clothes, five District Inspectors of Royal Irish Constabulary, and four members of Dublin Metropolitan Police in plain clothes, are still here without being examined, although the Commission was obliged to adjourn till Tuesday for want of witnesses; whether they or any of them have been in frequent consultation with the *Times* advisers; what are they doing in London if they are not to be called; and, why do not police witnesses who have been examined return to their duties in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: District Inspector Newall was examined twice. He left on the 7th, the day after his second examination; was also here to give other evidence, which was dispensed with, and these circumstances rendered his attendance for a lengthened period necessary. The men named in paragraph 2 were examined before Christmas, but were detained for the purpose of giving further evidence. Sergeant Faucett was subsequently examined. Head Constable Stretton has returned to Ireland. Sergeant Faucett and Acting Sergeant O'Brien are still here as witnesses. Constable Kenny was here for a considerable time without being examined. His attendance has now been dispensed with. The members of the Royal Irish Constabulary in London on subpœna wear plain clothes unless when actually going to be examined, and Constable Kenny followed the usual practice. Sergeant Clark, of Tralee, is not still here. He was examined on the 13th of December; but it appears he was detained for further cross-examination if required. His attendance was dispensed with on the 7th inst. Superintendent Mallon, of Dublin, has been here for several months without being examined. He was subpœnaed to produce documents which were afterwards admitted. During part of the time of his attendance in London he has been occupied both at the police-court and at Middlesex Sessions as a witness against Patrick Molloy. He returned to Dublin on the 9th inst., after his services in connection with the latter case were dispensed with. Mr. Webb is a retired Constabulary officer, who was examined, proved that Mr. William Redmond had been at one time going about under an assumed name distributing "No Rent" manifestoes, &c. There is no such person as Detective Sergeant Humphreys, of Queenstown; but Head Constable Humphreys, of Liverpool, who was stationed at Queenstown some ten years ago, was in attendance on subpœna for several weeks, and was not examined, as the branch of the case to which his evidence referred was not gone into. There are two District Inspectors and 16 men of the Royal Irish Constabulary still in attendance at the Commission, in obedience to their subpœnas. There is no such distinction as indicated in the Question as to men in uniform and plain clothes. All members of the force, when being examined before the

Commission, wear uniform. There are no members of the Dublin police here at present. Severals members of that force were over recently in connection with the proceedings against Patrick Molloy. Of the 16 men alluded to, the attendance of some has now been dispensed with, and several others have only recently arrived. When called upon, no doubt, all witnesses supply any legitimate information in their power. And so far as the Government are concerned, they have been left at perfect liberty to supply such evidence as they could, and to dispose of their time for that purpose as they thought proper. They have all been in attendance in obedience to their subpœnas, ready to give evidence when called, and every effort has been made, in the interest of Irish administration, from time to time to have their attendance dispensed with at the earliest possible moment. Let me add that, while this is, I believe, a full and accurate account of what has occurred, I by no means commit myself to the proposition that, under no circumstances, ought an Irish constable to be in London for the purpose of aiding the investigation now going on before the Commission except under subpœna.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has any information as to whether Head Constable Preston is in town or not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This question is not on the paper. I endeavoured to obtain information as to every matter on the paper.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: I desire to ask the Attorney General whether Faucett and O'Brien, who are said to be still here, are remaining to be examined by the *Times*?

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is the Chief Secretary aware that an Inspector named Siddel, who has returned to Ireland and who was here since before Christmas, has not been examined, and that an officer of the name of Tierney has been in London attending the Commission up to the present and has not been examined at all?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: I am afraid I do not follow the proceedings of the Commission with the attention that I might, and therefore I cannot answer that question.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The Attorney General having stated the other day that the communications with these Irish officials have been made at his request through Mr. Soames, may I ask whether the attendance of all these persons was ordered at the request of the Attorney General through Mr. Soames?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed, and I have no doubt informed correctly, that the police constables in question attended in London on subpœna from the Court. I know nothing about the matter more than that.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman is aware that the Court does not order a subpœna except upon the application of someone. What I wish to ask is whether the persons subpœnaed were subpœnaed at the instance of the Attorney General communicated through Mr. Soames?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no doubt that they were subpœnaed at the instances of Mr. Soames.

SIR W. HARCOURT: That is not my question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR; Well, I do not know anything more about it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is there now any officer from Ireland in charge of these police, and can the right hon. Gentleman give his name, and tell us how many officers there are left in London?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I gave the information in my answer; but if the hon. Member will put a question on the paper I shall be very glad to answer it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is there any officer in charge of them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe there is.

MR. W. REDMOND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is the fact, as reported in some quarters, that circulars have been sent to Constabulary officers all over Ireland ordering them to seek information and evidence likely to be useful to the *Times*?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman will put the question down in the usual course.

CRIMINAL APPEALS.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government will grant a Return of Sentences which have been

increased on appeal from one court to a higher court during Her Majesty's reign in the United Kingdom?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): Appeals in England from the decisions of magistrates to Quarter Sessions are given by Statutes which, it is believed, universally give to the Court of Appeal no power except to reverse or confirm the sentence below, and, therefore, no cases of increase or diminution of sentences can have occurred. The better opinion seems to be that the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, c. 49, Section 31 (5), does not give to the Court of Quarter Sessions the power to increase the sentence. The Return asked for cannot, therefore, be given.

SIR J. SWINBURNE: Am I to understand that there are no instances in Great Britain of sentences being increased? And will the First Lord of the Treasury be kind enough to grant me a Return showing how many sentences have been increased in Ireland on appeal during Her Majesty's reign?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon Gentleman asks us to search the Records for a period of over fifty years. That is a very serious undertaking, but if he will put down what he requires, and the information has not been already furnished to the House, I will consider if it can be granted.

THE SALT UNION.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the question of the legality of the Salt Union (Limited) on the face of their own prospectus and advertisements has been referred to the Law Officers of the Crown; and, whether the Government will agree to a Committee to inquire into the subject of this and other combinations of capitalists with the avowed object of raising the price of articles of consumption?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman appears to be of the opinion that the Salt Union is guilty of an infraction of the law. If he holds that opinion, it is perfectly open to him or to any other person in the United Kingdom to take proceedings in support of that view, but I retain the opinion I expressed a few days ago that the inevitable result of a combination to raise prices is to stimulate production and competition, which must bring down prices to a lower level than that from which they originally started. The events of the last few days furnish abundant evidence of the absolute certainty of such a result, and I have no doubt, if the hon. Gentleman lives long enough, he will see salt at a lower price than that at which it stood before the Salt Union was formed. With these views I have only to say as to a Committee, that it is for the hon. Gentleman to make out a case for any Motion he may put on the paper, and he must support it by facts and arguments which will convince the House of the necessity of such a Committee.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: The right hon. Gentleman has given a very argumentative answer to questions I have not asked him. Will he be good enough to answer the question I have put—whether the opinion of the Law Officers has been taken?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have given abundant reasons why I should not answer that question. If this combination is illegal it is open to any member of the public to take action.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: May I assume that the opinion of the Law Officers has not been taken?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Member must not assume anything of the kind.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask whether, in the event of the combination coming under the Joint Stock Companies Act, and bearing in mind the recently decided case against raising the price of the necessaries of life, it would not be the duty of the Government to prevent the registration of such a Company?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: That is obviously a question of which I ought to have notice.

SCOTCH BILLS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Government will agree to the appointment of a Standing Committee for the consideration of such Bills relating to Scotland as may by an order of the House, in each case, be referred to it?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am unable to give the hon. Member the assurance

he desires, but he may be certain that if any Bills relating to Scotland are referred by order of the House to a Standing Committee, the assistance of Scotch Members in dealing with the Bills will be invited in addition to the ordinary Committee, which it is to be presumed will contain, by its original constitution, that proportion which Members for Scotland bear to the whole House.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to give notice that, on an early occasion, I will call attention to the subject.

THE CARRYING OF REVOLVERS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I have to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government propose to take any steps to restrain the indiscriminate carrying of revolvers in public places?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The question is an extremely difficult one, but I can assure my hon. Friend it is receiving the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

STEAMING IN WEAVING SHEDS.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the strong feeling among the cotton weavers in certain parts of Lancashire upon the subject of sizing and steaming in weaving sheds; and whether the Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the question?

MR. H. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, may I supplement it by asking whether the Government will extend the inquiry asked for by the noble Lord to the question of factory inspection generally?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think my hon. Friend will see that his Question has really no relation to the Question on the paper. But while it is extremely reasonable that both Questions should be inquired into, the subjects are entirely separate. In reply to the noble Lord, I have to say the Government will consent to the appointment of a Committee, if my noble Friend will move for it.

THE WELSH LANGUAGE.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the published opinion of Mr. Attorney General, that the Act 27 Hen. 8, c. 26, s. 20, as amended by 50 and 51 Vic. c. 55, is in force, and that the provisions of "The Local Government Act, 1888," have not removed from the members of the County Council the obligation to carry on their proceedings in English; and, if so, whether he will introduce a Bill to repeal or modify the section of the Statute thus rendered obsolete?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: In answering a Question of the right hon. Member for East Denbighshire, I stated that Section 20 of the Act 27 Henry VIII., c. 26, was repealed, and this answer was correct as regards one edition of the Revised Statutes, but Section 17, to which reference was intended to be made, has not been repealed. The question is one that will be dealt with in the next revision of the Statutes, but I may remark that it would be a matter of serious inconvenience if the proceedings of any public body were carried on entirely in Welsh.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): May I ask whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to repeal this Act, seeing it is practically obsolete?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I have taken steps to bring it under the notice of the Statute Law Revision Commission.

THE SAMOAN CONFERENCE.

MR. WILLIAM M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state to the House the name of the Representative of this country appointed to the Conference on Samoa shortly to be held at Berlin?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: As the date of the Conference has not yet been fixed, no appointment has been made.

THE ENGINEERS OF THE ROYAL NAVY.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that great dissatisfaction

exists amongst the Officers of the Engineer Branch of the Royal Navy, as regards their rank and emoluments; and, whether, considering the very important duties and great responsibility now thrown upon these officers, he will appoint a Committee to inquire into the grounds of such dissatisfaction?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I am not aware that great dissatisfaction exists among the officers of the Engineer Branch of the Royal Navy as regards their rank and emoluments, neither has any representation to that effect been made to the Admiralty through the proper channels of communication. A Committee was appointed, in 1885, on which the Engineer Branch was represented to inquire into the relative rank of the several branches of the Service, and effect was given to their recommendations. I do not propose to re-open this question by the appointment of a fresh Committee.

MATABALELAND.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, West): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the character of the concession said to have been recently granted by the Chief Lo Bengula to Messrs. Rudd and Rhodes, by which, in consideration for a sum of £1,200 a year, together with 1,000 rifles and a hundred thousand rounds of ammunition, these gentlemen are reported to have obtained sole rights of prospecting and working for minerals in a territory the size of Italy, Her Majesty's Government will take any steps to call the attention of the Chief to the disadvantages and dangers to the peace of the country incident to such a monopoly; and, whether, in the event of Her Majesty's Government extending at any future time a protectorate over the Colony now under the sphere of British influence, they will refuse to recognize the concession in question, or any similar concession that may be contrary to the interests of the Chief and people of Matabelland, and likely to lead to complications and to a breach of the peace?

*BARON H. DE WORMS: Her Majesty's Government have hitherto abstained from interfering with any concession granted by Lo Bengula, as that Chief is not under their protection, is independent, and has not, till lately, asked for advice. He has now by his messenger asked for advice, and that someone may be sent to him by the Queen. It is not clear whether he desires to have some officer permanently resident with him, or only temporarily for the special purpose of advising him upon the present state of affairs. But Her Majesty's Government are prepared to send some officer to Lo Bengula should he still desire it, and should he agree to any arrangement proposed by Her Majesty's Government in respect of such a mission. In the meantime I may state that Her Majesty's Government do not approve of that term in the concession referred to which provides for the supply of arms and ammunition, and they would advise Lo Bengula to have this altered. If at any time a Protectorate were declared at Lo Bengula's request over his territory, Her Majesty's Government would discountenance any concession containing such terms, or any concession of the kind referred to in the concluding words of the question.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Then have the Government changed their mind since they told me in answer to a similar Question that they thought this concession was to the advantage of the country?

*BARON DE WORMS: I think the hon. Member misunderstood the answer. I said the Government had not expressed an opinion either way, but the Governor of the Cape had used an expression implying that he approved the policy.

H.M.S. "SULTAN."

SIR J. SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): May I ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he has received any further information with regard to Her Majesty's ship *Sultan*?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I have not received any news to-day, but late last night I received a telegram informing me that the first attempt to tow the *Sultan* off had failed, but that they were hopeful to get her off on the next attempt.

ATTEMPTED MURDER IN IRELAND.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland can give the House any information as to the attempted assassi-

nation of Mr. Creagh while driving to church with his sister in the County Clare yesterday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: All the information I possess on the subject is that a dastardly attempt to murder this gentleman was made, and that he was wounded, although, fortunately, not seriously.

IRISH PROSECUTIONS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether it was by his authority that a letter has been written by his secretary, Mr. Wyndham, to a correspondent, and published in the newspapers, stating that "No person has ever been prosecuted either for cheering a popular patriot or for booing Mr. Balfour?"

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I had not seen the letter till my attention was called to it by the Question of the hon. Member, but I am perfectly prepared to take the responsibility of the allegation therein made.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether Mr. Sheehy did not serve a month in gaol, and whether a solicitor's clerk from Tralee was not sentenced to six months' imprisonment, for these alleged offences?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of the Question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The reason I put the Question without notice was, I thought it right to assume that any statement made by Mr. Geo. Wyndham is on the authority of the Chief Secretary and is backed by him.

THE ARMY ESTIMATES.

*THE SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): May I by the leave of the House make an appeal to the noble Lord (Viscount Wolmer) and the hon. Member (Sir G. Campbell) who have notices on the paper to be moved upon going into Committee of Supply, to allow the House at once to go into Committee on the Army Estimates? I do not for a moment dispute the importance of the subjects raised by the notices, but, unluckily, the time at our disposal is very short, and there is a strong feeling in many quarters in favour of deferring the discussion on them until after the Government proposals have been made known. I venture, therefore, to hope that the noble Lord and the hon. Member will see their way to postpone their observations until the House had had an opportunity of hearing the Ministerial statement on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The noble Lord desires to call attention to the Militia, but this can very suitably be done in Committee, and I, therefore, hope that my noble Friend would wait until he had heard the full statement of the position taken up by the Government. I think also the Motion of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy could be better discussed in Committee.

*SIR G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Last Session, at the request of the right hon. Gentleman, I postponed a Motion of great importance, and, although I should have liked to raise it on the present occasion, I think the appeal is so reasonable that I earnestly trust my hon. Friends will allow the Minister to have the cream of the time of the House this afternoon.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): Although the Motion which stands in my name will be recognized by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War as one of great importance, I will defer to the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman, and to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton, if the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy will do the same.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): A burnt child fears the fire; but after the strong appeals that have been made to me I do not feel justified in pressing my Motion, although I hold it is necessarily preliminary to the Estimates. I hope the statement to be made by the right hon. Gentleman will shadow forth a scheme for dealing with the defences of the island as a whole.

DR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended to proceed with the Supplementary Estimates to-night?

MR. HANBURY (Preston): May I be allowed to put this Question? If we allow you to go into Committee, will there be opportunities for further discussion of the Estimates, instead of their being postponed for an indefinite period?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I wish to say it is the desire and intention of the Govern-

ment to give an early day for the further consideration of the Army Estimates, and not to drive them off. I am afraid there is no chance of reaching the Supplementary Estimates to-night.

VISCOUNT WOLMER: Of course it is distinctly understood that a general discussion will be in order in Committee.

MR. E. STANHOPE: On the Vote for the men there is perfect liberty for a general discussion. Sometimes by favour of the House it is allowed also on a later Vote.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Before the House adjourned last year I intended to raise a discussion in reference to the Channel Islands Militia. I should not like to be excluded from raising it to-night, and, therefore, I wish to know if I shall have an opportunity of doing so? I do not, of course, want to hinder the right hon. Gentleman making his statement.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I am sorry the hon. Member did not tell me of his desire. The difficulty is that the Channel Islands Militia do not come under the War Office; but I certainly will raise no technical objection to an early discussion of that question?

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made and Question proposed,

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 152,282, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890."

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I do not think it would be seemly on my part if I did not offer, first of all, my hearty thanks and those of the Government to those hon. Members who have been kind enough to make way in order that we might get into Committee, and that the House might have an opportunity of hearing the full statement of the Government upon the Estimates now before the Committee. The Committee will have observed that I propose this year to revert to the old practice of explaining in the House itself the general policy of the War Office, as expressed in the Estimates of the year. The written Memorandum, which during the last two years has been published with the Estimates, though in some respects convenient, seems to have entirely failed in one important respect. Very few people read it, and throughout the year all sorts of curious mis-statements have cropped up, which a cursory perusal of the Memorandum would have immediately exposed. I have, therefore, to ask the Committee to grant me its kind indulgence if—I fear at some length—I attempt to give a comprehensive account of the work being done. It is not, indeed, to be hoped that the present Estimates will satisfy those who think they can measure progress by the amount of money spent. Some increase was and is undoubtedly necessary for causes which I shall explain. But for a large part of the improvement which our Military Forces undoubtedly require we must look not to money, but to continuous advance in organization, carried out upon a definite and well-considered plan. More than that, every Vote has been most carefully scrutinized, and every item not considered to be essential has been questioned by the Financial Department. And, secondly, it is necessary to point out that everything cannot be done at once, and that out of many services undoubtedly most important, which the fierce competition in the improvement of weapons of destruction now going on all over the world render necessary, many considerations, of which one only is economy, compel us to select the most urgent only for immediate execution. And, thirdly, I should like to say, in justice to the War Office, that our uniform policy and practice is to give the preference in every respect to the requirements of the Navy, and to postpone, if not to abandon services, if they interfere in any way with the execution of demands for the sea service. And now, Mr. Courtney, as I am anxious to explain with perfect frankness our existing state of preparation, will the Committee allow me to test it by briefly indicating the principal steps which would have to be taken on the occurrence of a grave emergency? The Militia would be at once embodied. It has been customary to give 15 days' notice, but in real difficulty they would be called up in a very much

shorter time. Those assigned to garrisons could proceed at once to their destination. The Reserves would be called up. Experience has, on a former occasion, shown that many of the men presented themselves within 48 hours, and I have no reason to doubt that the bulk could be obtained in about four days. The arms necessary for the Reserve men are now being stored at the depôts, and will be stored at the points of concentration. Then the Volunteers and the Yeomanry, or such part of them as the emergency might require, would be called out. We rely, in the event of the danger being prolonged, upon half of the men being able to be present on duty at one time; but in the actual crisis not only would nearly all enrolled Volunteers be in the ranks, but they would be swelled by offers of service from many who have passed through the force. We come now to the disposition to be made of these forces. In the event of an emergency the first duty which devolves upon the Land Forces is the protection of our ports and coaling stations, and orders would be at once issued to lay down submarine mines. The military ports at home and abroad are now all provided with the necessary buildings and stores. The coaling stations and nearly all the commercial ports to be defended by submarine mines are already furnished with a large proportion of these stores, and the general result would be that almost every port selected to be defended throughout the Empire could be provided with a substantial mine defence in ten days, while a considerable amount of protection, sufficient to have a very deterrent effect on the enemy's cruisers, could be laid down in three days. The Submarine Miners for this service have already been raised in almost every case, and are composed, according to the circumstances of the port, of Royal Engineers, of Militia or Volunteer Submarine Miners, supplemented, where necessary, by native auxiliaries or by hired labour. This service alone has involved an enormous amount of preparation, and its very advanced condition justifies us in attaching great importance to it in our scheme of defence. The next step in organization is the provision of garrisons. The whole of the garrisons for our fortresses and commercial ports at home are told off. In the latter case, they consist exclusively of Militia and Volunteers, but the total strength of these garrisons for our home ports alone amounts to no less than 124,000 men. The particular duties to be performed by each corps have been laid down by the General Officers commanding in their schemes of defence. And, among the many changes in details of administration which have been introduced, I do not think any greater improvement can be found than that which places the whole defence of the Thames under the control of a single General Officer, instead of dividing it, as has hitherto been the case, between several districts. Upon the armaments I shall have a few words to say separately. The question of providing adequate garrisons for the fortresses and coaling stations abroad has undergone the most careful consideration, and the establishment of the Army has this year been increased in order to deal with it. Every case has been considered upon its merits, and dealt with after consideration of the probable dangers to be incurred and all other circumstances affecting it. The whole garrison, which would be necessary in war time, has not been completed in cases where its reinforcement would be comparatively easy, or where the climate is such as to be dangerous to the lives of Europeans. But in others, especially the very distant stations, the garrison has been increased, and is being supplemented by native auxiliaries. This is especially the case at Hong Kong and Singapore. At Gibraltar the garrison is already sufficient; but considerable reinforcements are to be sent to Malta, where also it is hoped to raise a regiment of Militia, and hut accommodation for the increased force is in course of construction. The general policy will be pursued of utilizing native auxiliaries as far as it is possible and prudent, and so of minimizing the constant drain which is involved in maintaining a large European force in the Colonies. And I may add that, in return for the increased protection afforded, additional contributions towards the expenditure may fairly be expected from some of our Colonies. But, in attempting to facilitate and to quicken the rapid mobilization of our defensive forces in this country, we were confronted by two grave difficulties, with both of which I have endeavoured

to grapple. The first was the deficiency of horses. Like every foreign country, we must rely, on the outbreak of emergency, on obtaining, as quickly as possible, a large additional supply of horses. Abroad, it is universally accomplished by requisition. And we have now, for the first time in this country, under the National Defence Act of last year, full legal powers for this purpose. But we have not stopped there. We have established a system of registration, by means of which, at a very small cost to the public, we have a list of horses on a register, which can be obtained at the shortest notice. I have before alluded to the very cordial co-operation which we have met with from many large horse owners in the Metropolis and elsewhere. Last year we took powers to register 7,000 horses, and it is satisfactory to know that a very considerable number are suitable for the Cavalry, and all broken to bit and bridle. This year we ask for a large increase of that number—no less than 14,000; and there is little doubt that in this manner, backed, if necessary, by the use of our compulsory powers, we can obtain in case of emergency even a much larger number of horses. We hope, therefore, that this primary necessity has been to a large extent overcome. But before I leave the subject of horses, as to which we are much indebted to the able and energetic action of General Ravenhill, I should like to add that the Remount Establishment is working most satisfactorily, and with marked economy. We can without difficulty obtain, within the United Kingdom, an ample supply of horses for the normal requirements of our remounts. The second of the grave difficulties to which I alluded is the excessive centralization of our stores. Partly from motives of economy, and partly because no general scheme whatever existed for the mobilization of our troops, there has been a constant attempt to crowd everything into Woolwich; and, unless a remedy had been applied, the consequences, in the event of a sudden order to call out all our available defensive forces by land and sea, must have been grave delay, if not something much worse. Decentralization is now actively going on. The places where, for convenience and rapidity of concentration, stores should be placed have now been for the most part selected. Some buildings have been acquired or adopted for the purpose; in other cases new storehouses are being built. Many of our arms and accoutrements have already been decentralized, and the work is rapidly proceeding. But we have also borne in mind the safe and economical custody of the stores. Some which from their nature are perishable or require very careful attention must be specially provided for. But the great object has been that, within the limits so imposed, the officers responsible for the various sections of our defensive forces should know what stores to ask for, and where they are to be obtained without delay, with as little reference as possible to any central authority. Into this great work of decentralization, with all its enormous mass of detail, the present Quartermaster General has thrown himself with his well-known energy and business capacity. Putting aside these preliminary difficulties, therefore, which are, I hope, in a fair way of being overcome, and are, indeed, already partially surmounted, we are at present in this position with regard to our Regular Forces. The Reserve being called up, we could put into the field at short notice for home defence a force of 80,000 Regular troops, with a proper proportion of all arms of the Service, with the exception of certain small units advisedly left to be organized on mobilization, but the machinery for creating which has been worked out under Regulations already compiled. Lists of officers to fill all the commands and Staff posts have been prepared. Any deficiency in horses, not provided under our system of registration, would be made good by requisition. Ten days should, therefore, suffice to assemble the men and horses and distribute clothes and arms. There are more than sufficient stores in hand for the requirements of this force operating at home; but until the process of decentralizing the stores is completed, I cannot accurately estimate the time required for their issue. When it is completed the issue will be exceedingly rapid, and the greater part of the operations required for mobilization would take place automatically on the order being given, without requiring instructions from headquarters. This Field Army would be at once concentrated at railway junctions or

other points which have been carefully chosen, with the view of affording the greatest facility for moving the troops at a few hours' notice to any point that may be threatened. And every detail required for this operation is gradually being laid down. After providing for this Field Army, there will still remain a small force of Regular troops of all arms, together with a good many regiments of Militia, for which the same preparations are not yet complete. But they would be mobilized and utilized according to the circumstances of the particular danger that may arise. Besides these, there remains a large body of Volunteers. Part are assigned to the duties of purely local defence, the remainder, consisting of a force which at a crisis could be at least doubled in number, will be mobilized in defence of the point or points principally threatened, and especially of London. The Volunteer Infantry assigned to these duties has been formed into brigades under officers selected for military capacity and personal influence amongst their men. The system is developing itself far more rapidly than could have been hoped last year, and many of the brigades, having in the interval taken active steps to improve themselves locally, will be tested in joint operations before long. I sometimes hear it objected, "What is the use of all this force without any transport?" Well, that is one of the questions which we have thoroughly taken in hand, and our experience conclusively proves that by a simple system of registration the necessary transport can be kept in a sufficient state of readiness to be easily available in the time of emergency. We have now also 67 batteries of Volunteer Artillery with 268 guns. I have noticed a good many attempts to decry the value of these guns. Well, all I can say is, that more than half of them are powerful breech-loading guns of a far heavier calibre than any invader could bring against them; and all, though not, of course, of the newest types, are perfectly suitable for the purpose for which they are required. The duties assigned to these brigades and batteries in the event of emergency are of the most important character. I do not think I can be accused of underrating the value of the Volunteers. I have been and am doing my best, within the limits created by the peculiar circumstances of the force, to organize and utilize it to the utmost extent of which it can be made capable. But its best friends will not deny that it is of unequal merit. Some battalions, I am assured by competent military critics, fully rival any Line regiment. Some batteries of Artillery are conspicuous for efficiency, and show signs of continuous improvement. But there are other corps, both of Infantry and Artillery, that undoubtedly could not be prudently manœuvred in the field against a well-trained and disciplined army. How, then, can they best be utilized for the defence of the country and of the Metropolis? This leads me to the subject of the plan which we have formed for this purpose. And, first, let me say at once that neither officially nor unofficially, neither by the officers of the Department nor by the malign influence which has been ingeniously suggested as at work, has any plan been brought before me for building permanent fortifications for the defence of London. Such a scheme is extravagant, visionary, and wholly unnecessary. Indeed, the only definite proposal of this sort of recent years which has been brought to my notice was that officially put forward by no less an authority than General Sir Andrew Clarke, who, in a Minute when Inspector General of Fortifications, which I have before me, proposed to build, besides others, four permanent fortifications for the defence of London at a cost, for three alone, of about £350,000. I am aware that that officer has subsequently modified his views; and indeed on this subject, not only is there agreement among my military advisers and the other distinguished officers who have been consulted, but there is absolute unanimity of opinion as to the principles of the scheme. Everyone hopes and thinks that our first line of defence should be strong enough to defend this country from the possibility of invasion, and the scheme now adopted is an additional security, necessary only in what may be a remote contingency. But in that contingency some part of the battle would have to be fought by troops insufficiently drilled, and from various causes inferior, not in courage or physical strength, but in knowledge and preparation, to the troops to which they

would be opposed. It is, therefore, necessary to prepare and strengthen the position they would occupy, so as at once to protect the defenders and to make up for their necessary deficiencies. There are certain strategical positions round London commanding roads and railways which are essential to its defence. These have been carefully examined by our most experienced officers, and places have been marked out, where, upon the occurrence of grave emergency, certain steps, arranged in every way beforehand, could at once be taken. Every preparation will be made for enabling the work to be executed without delay. And these are the positions on which, on London being threatened, the defenders of London would in a few days be concentrated and intrenched. The House will understand that it is neither desirable nor necessary that I should enter into a detailed description. But this must be added. Almost all this work is to be left to be rapidly carried out when the emergency arises. There are, however, a few sites of specially urgent importance which we deem it essential to acquire at once. It is the intention to establish ordinary field works in the form of intrenched camps, which would form the backbone of the defensive line, and in which certain articles which would be required at the shortest notice could be stored, and where it will be possible hereafter to exercise some of the defenders in the actual place which they might have to defend. The cost of these precautions will be inconsiderable. We have hitherto been met by the owners of property affected in a reasonable and patriotic spirit; and the result will, therefore, as we hope, be that the security of the Metropolis will have been assured at a very moderate outlay and with the least possible disturbance of private interests. The negotiations are pending for these essential sites, and I have accordingly included in the Estimates a sum of £20,000. I have now stated with some frankness, but without entering into detail, the general preparations that have been made for the concentration of our forces. They may be described as incomplete. I am the first to admit their incompleteness. But when it is remembered that two years ago none of these preparations were in existence, and that neither for our Regular nor for our Auxiliary Forces was any plan in operation for making the most effective use of them in emergency, I am entitled, at least, to claim that considerable progress has been made. In the evidence before the Committee on Army Estimates there were some strong recommendations in favour of calling out the Army Reserve for some form of annual training; and, in the discussion in Committee of this House, I promised, while pointing out some of the grave difficulties to be encountered, to consider whether some partial and tentative scheme could not be adopted this year. A very close examination of the subject has led me to postpone that proposal. I found that many large employers of Reserve men, while ready to make any sacrifice at the time of national emergency, plainly intimated that anything like an annual training, which took the men away from their ordinary work, would compel them to discontinue the employment of Reserve men. I found, too, that large exemptions would be necessary. Men in the police, for instance, could not be called out; and if men in Government employ were generally exempted, the objection of private employers would naturally have been much intensified; and the feeling against employing Reserve men, which has of late years been so happily and so largely overcome, might have been increased to an extent sufficient to endanger the whole system of an Army Reserve. Perhaps the simplest form of keeping the Reserve up to the mark—which will become more important when the new rifle is issued—would be by the requirement of a certain amount of musketry practice, and it is in this direction that I hope to find a solution of what is a most difficult problem. The question is sometimes asked whether it would not be possible to put military organization to some practical test? It is suggested that an Army Corps should be mobilized without notice, and it is pointed out that a similar experiment was tried in France last year. To mobilize that Army Corps nearly 6,000 horses had to be requisitioned, and the total extra cost of the experiment was a quarter of a million sterling, and yet that took place in a limited area, within which a large proportion of the

force to be mobilized were already resident. Our complicated system of spreading our troops all over the United Kingdom, the situation of our barracks, and other local exigencies, would render a similar task in this country one which would be felt as a disturbance in all branches of our national life, and which would entail a cost out of all proportion to the advantages to be derived from it. The organization of the Royal Artillery has excited some interest during the past year. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lambeth (General Fraser) will see that, although it has only been possible to make a small addition to the batteries of Horse Artillery on the Home Establishment, an attempt has been made to meet my engagement last year with regard to ammunition columns. We have placed in the Estimates the nucleus of these columns, and provision has also been made to increase the reserve of drivers, who would be called up in time of war for similar service. But the most important step taken in these Estimates in connection with the Artillery is the progress made in the construction of the new 12-pounder field gun. Before long I hope that no less than 45 batteries will be armed with this gun. I may also remind the Committee that a short time ago a Committee was appointed, under the presidency of Lord Harris, to inquire into the organization of the Royal Artillery. After taking much evidence, the Committee was exactly divided in opinion on the subject of the separation of the Garrison from the Horse and Field Artillery. It appeared, further, that while the senior officers of the regiment mostly opposed separation almost all the juniors were in favour of it, although by no means unanimous as to the mode in which it was to be carried out. In these circumstances I have, upon the whole, decided that the wise course is to carry out some of the unanimous proposals of the Committee as to grouping the batteries of Garrison Artillery, but that the main question of separation must stand over for further consideration. And now I turn from questions of organization and mobilization to the subject of armaments; and as my Department is charged with the supply of warlike stores to the Navy as well as to the Army, I think that the Committee will expect me to give some general account of the production during the past and the prospects during the coming years. Probably the Committee hardly realize the magnitude of this work. Taking the orders for the Army and Navy together, but excluding the demands for India, there will have been passed through the War Office during 1888-9 orders for warlike stores to the value of nearly four millions and a half sterling; and during the present year, if the House approve the naval proposals of the Government, they will reach even a larger amount. Of this amount rather more than half will have been executed in the Ordnance factories, but the whole of the stores represented by this sum have to be inspected and tested before being passed into either Service. We have now had a year's experience of the new plan of dividing the cost of warlike stores between the Army and the Navy, each Service bearing its own shares upon its own Votes. I venture to say that, for the purpose for which this change was effected, it has been completely successful. It was carried out in order that the true cost of each Service should be shown upon the Votes for that Service, and in order to prevent the scandal, so much complained of by the Committee on Army Estimates, but which was practically put an end to by the present First Lord of the Treasury, of the proposals for the necessary armament and equipment of the Fleet framed at the Admiralty, being cut down at the War Office, mainly on economical grounds. Under the new system each Department decides upon its own responsibility the amount of the Vote for warlike stores which it feels it to be its duty to submit to Parliament. But, looking at the vast work to be performed, the question at once suggests itself—and it is the most vital question connected with the whole subject—whether our present sources of supply, especially in the matter of big guns, are now adequate, and, in the face of the coming large orders for the Navy, are likely to continue adequate in carrying out their orders with all reasonable punctuality? To this question Her Majesty's Government have given the most careful consideration, and my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty furnished an answer on Thursday last. A year

ago, feeling that our knowledge on these points was not sufficient to enable a complete answer to be given, we set on foot independent inquiries into the resources of the great gun factories in this country, their power of production, the causes of the delay that had already occurred, and the steps that might be necessary to prevent it in the future. And we ultimately came to the conclusion that several steps of the greatest importance were immediately necessary. We held, first, that the existing gun-producing power of this country might not be sufficient for the great programme to be undertaken for land and sea service, and we accordingly took steps to enlarge it by intrusting a contract for big guns to Messrs. Vickers, of Sheffield. The new machinery to be obtained and set up before any new firm can undertake the task of making big guns, and the experience which can alone enable it to accomplish it satisfactorily, necessarily involve delay. But the result is that we have now four large firms engaged in producing steel forgings for big guns, and three firms, besides the Royal Gun Factory, engaged in building up and completing them; and in every one of these cases additional machinery has recently been laid down for dealing with the larger description of guns. And to this we may add that the patterns are practically settled, the difficulties in regard to steel manufacture have been surmounted, and we have greatly increased securities for progress in a monthly Return showing the exact state of each gun, and in the inspection which takes place at regular intervals. In consequence of this, I venture, with much more confidence than before, but with the full admission that past events justify some hesitation, to give to the Committee a forecast of the turn-out during the present year. Between April 1 and the end of the first quarter of the next financial year, we hope to receive 23 guns for land and sea service, of 22 tons and upwards; during the second quarter 32, and in the third quarter 24 guns. And as in that quarter the first deliveries are expected of guns now in the course of construction by Messrs. Vickers, and the fullest advantage will be felt of the improved machinery to which I have already alluded, we ought from that time to have an increased output. I have not included the 6-inch or other comparatively small breech-loading guns, because, with regard to them, there ought to be no substantial difficulty. Undoubtedly, however, the great Navy programme now proposed to Parliament imposes a heavy strain upon our gun-producing powers, as regards guns of the largest types. We have only lately learned the number and nature of all the guns to be provided, and it is, therefore, not possible at present to state how all the work will be allotted. But the whole situation has been most carefully considered in the light of past experience and of undoubted failures to perform promises, and we are confident of being able to make such arrangements as will provide for the delivery, with reasonable certainty, within the prescribed time, of all the guns in the programme. The principle, however, with which I set out, and which I am sure will meet with cordial acceptance, that the requirements of the Land Service in this matter must be subordinated to those of the Navy, may lead, as it has led during the past year, to some delay in carrying out the improved defences of our forts. But every endeavour shall be made to prevent that delay extending to the defence of the coaling stations, without which the full advantage of our great maritime strength cannot be taken. It will be remembered that last year I explained at very considerable length the state of the defences of our ports and coaling stations, making no secret of the grave deficiencies that existed; and accordingly a sum of about three and a-half millions sterling, provided partly by loan and partly out of Estimates, was assigned to complete the defences of the coaling stations according to the programme accepted by Parliament, and to effect certain urgent improvements in other cases. All the guns were put in hand at once, and with them, as well as with the necessary works, substantial progress has been made. Speaking first of the coaling stations, I neither deny nor justify the delay that has taken place. Most unfortunately, when the armaments were originally selected and the scheme of defence laid down, much to their credit, by the Party opposite, a good many of the guns selected were of types which had never hitherto been made or tried, and for which even the

designs were quite unsettled. The whole question of the construction and mounting of heavy breech-loading ordnance was in an experimental state; and delay arose, to be aggravated by other causes for which less excuse can be made. In the case of the lighter armaments and quick-firing guns, the greater portion of the work has been done, and even with the heavier armaments good progress is being made. The remaining armaments of Hong Kong and Singapore — the delay in which has naturally given rise to indignation—ought to be completed, as they are promised, within the year; and some, indeed, of the heavy guns ought to be ready next month. At the Cape the works are being carried on by the Colonial Government; one big gun is in position, and the remaining guns for Table Bay and Simon's Bay ought to go out this year. In the case of what are technically termed the Imperial ports, at home and abroad, good progress is being made. The defences of Portsmouth, both on the land and sea side, though it would not be right for me to go into detail, have been materially strengthened during the year, and some very powerful guns have been mounted. Since last year the whole defence of the Thames has been reconsidered, and a scheme, involving larger additions of armament than had been originally intended, has been recommended by the military authorities. The necessary works are in active progress, including the remodelling of some of the existing armaments, and the present year ought to show a most substantial addition to the defences. Special attention is also being paid to Malta and Gibraltar, which, though heavily fortified, require additional guns of modern type. Here, too, great progress will be made during the present year. A good deal has been said during the year about the defences of our commercial ports. The Committee will, no doubt, recollect that I circulated last year the Report of a very able Committee which inquired into this matter with myself. The proposals of that Report were adopted in the Imperial Defence Act of last year, and are being carried out; and, in further compliance with them, I offered to certain ports that we would mount some breech-loading guns of modern type, if the localities would show a willingness to co-operate in the work of their own defence. These proposals have been criticized as inadequate. But every scheme of defence must be judged of in respect of its inadequacy to meet the particular danger to be anticipated. And I have, at least, very high naval authority for saying that guns of this description, which can be fired much more quickly than heavier guns, are—in addition to the submarine mines, protected by quick-firing guns—amply sufficient to meet the sort of attack to which these ports are liable to be subjected by the chance visit of a cruiser. For any additional defence they must rely upon our naval resources. I propose to lay upon the Table at the close of the financial year a Report from the Director General of Ordnance Factories upon the work of his Department. The magnitude of their operations will be shown by the fact that the turn-out for the year will be about two and a quarter millions in value; but there is every reason to believe that the amalgamation of all the factories under a single head is producing good results in the direction of economy and efficiency. I am unwilling to detain the Committee by dwelling upon the various branches of this work which might be of interest at the present time, and I will, therefore, only allude to one or two weapons. Since the adoption of the design for the new magazine rifle, a step, I am happy to say, characterized by complete unanimity, good progress has been made with the preparations for its manufacture. Rifles will be turned out by the Government factories at Enfield and at Birmingham, and by the trade in London and in Birmingham. The fact that all the parts of a military rifle are in this country with obvious advantage made interchangeable makes the time necessary for producing them with complete accuracy longer than it would otherwise be. But the work is being pushed steadily on, and it is satisfactory that the trials of the rifle in India, which had not completely reached us when the pattern was selected, have been in all respects very favourable to the new weapon. And in order that the two Army Corps, which will be the first to receive the rifle, may have only one sort of ammunition to carry, provision has been made in the Estimates for Maxim guns and for

carbines of the same calibre. The question of the powder has been one of great difficulty and anxiety. With the first issue of the rifle compressed pellets of black powder, which have been found to possess the necessary qualities, will be used, and this will be a considerable advance upon the present state of things. But it is also confidentially believed that a chemical powder has been found in all respects suited for our purposes, and possessing what many chemical powders now being tried abroad do not possess—stability under all conditions of climate; and to us, perhaps more than to any other country, this condition is absolutely essential. By the use of this powder the power of the new rifle will be considerably augmented; but, even with the compressed black powder, it will be possible to fire it without raising a sight at a range of 500 yards. It will be sighted up to 2,800 yards. I should like to take this public opportunity of expressing our hearty thanks to the Small Arms Committee, presided over by Major General Philip Smith, who brought so much ability and perseverance to the task of choosing a magazine rifle. This very difficult work has been performed with perfect fairness towards all inventors, and has produced a rifle which promises the most satisfactory results. Further experiments with the high explosive which recently showed such destructive results at Lydd prove that it can, in various forms, be employed with perfect safety for heavy guns, and that it may probably be made available for shells for our Field Artillery guns. During the past year the examination of all the arms in the hands of the troops has been continued. New arms have been issued to the men comprised in the First Army Corps; and in the case of the remainder of the Regular Army in this country unserviceable weapons, whether rifles, carbines, swords, or bayonets, have been withdrawn. Commanding officers of regiments have been made responsible for the mode in which all arms issued to the troops under their command are kept. I should like to add that the result of the examination has conclusively proved that the work was not undertaken a day too soon. Considerable neglect in certain cases, and in others weapons deteriorated by long use or by other causes, have been discovered; and though it is even now probable that defects may occur from time to time, the chances of such failure have, at leas been enormously reduced. It will lead to better care of weapons issued, and to improvement, where necessary, of pat terns. In one case, that of the swords known as of the pattern of 1885, it is admitted that the attempt to secure lightness has probably led to undue weakness in one part of the blade. Much has been said recently about swords of German and English manufacture. It is only fair to my Predecessors, who ordered swords from Solingen, to say that it has hitherto been difficult to get them in large numbers anywhere else, and that the results show that they have not failed to pass the tests imposed to any greater extent than the English swords. Now, however, we are having all our swords and bayonets made in England. Large numbers are being made at the Government Factory at Enfield. The contract with Messrs. Wilkinson is being executed in London, and two more contracts are about to be entered into, which will give the workmen in Birmingham and Sheffield full opportunity of showing the quality of their work. And now, if the Committee will pardon me for the length to which my remarks have extended, there is one other subject of grave importance as to which I shall also have some proposals to make to Parliament. They intimately concern the health and comfort of the private soldier. I do not allude to the daily ration, which was, as the Committee will perhaps recollect, referred to an independent Committee to investigate. That Committee has directed certain experiments to be made, and is not yet in a position to make a final Report. But, in the meantime, steps have been taken, in fulfilment of the pledge given by me to my hon. Friend the Member for Mr. Preston (Mr. Hanbury), to increase the supervision on the supplies of contractors, and on the mode of issue of the meat ration to the troops. But beyond this question of food there is another, even of greater importance, to which I have given special attention during the past year—I mean that of barrack accommodation. The evidence before the Select Committee on Army Estimates last year brought out very clearly the exceedingly unsatisfactory condition of our existing

barracks from more than one point of view. Some of them, originally acquired for temporary purposes, have never been suitable for permanent occupation. Others are in a very bad state of repair. The huts in our great military camp at Aldershot were built of wood after the Crimean War. They were intended to last 20 years, and they are now in such a state of decay that it is with the greatest possible difficulty we can keep some of them up at all. They cost £5 a-year to keep up, and will soon be past repair. Other barracks have been erected or acquired in localities which may have been suitable to the circumstances of the moment, but which are exceedingly inconvenient for the purposes of concentration in time of emergency, because the subsequent development of our railway system has brought other centres into prominence. Some of them are situated in districts where no rifle range is obtainable, and great cost must be incurred in moving detachments to a distanee for their annual practice ; and, lastly, they are insufficient in accommodation. The lodging allowance to soldiers, for whom barrack accommodation has not been provided, costs no less than £250,000 a-year. These difficulties have increased and become intensified year by year. The great demands upon the Estimates, especially in the direction of new armaments, and the increasing sums necessarily required for repair of rapidly deteriorating works, have led to the gradual contraction of the sum assigned to new construction, so that we are year by year getting into a worse position. Added to this, the requirements of modern sanitation, and of modern comfort, especially in the matter of recreation rooms and gymnasiums, have helped to absorb whatever money has been available. Nor is it too much to say that the question of barrack accommodation has never been looked at as a whole. The large expenditure upon barracks authorized by the Military Forces Localization Act in 1872 was entirely directed towards the erection of the 69 depôt centres for the establishment of the territorial system ; and Mr. Cardwell strictly limited his object to the erection of barracks for this purpose. The great cost of putting all our barracks upon a proper footing—estimated before the Committee at four or five millions sterling, has naturally proved a serious obstacle. But, on the other hand, it would be hopeless, within the lifetime of the present generation, to complete such a task out of the ordinary Estimates. The reconstruction of our camps alone, if carried on upon the scale attempted during the last few years, would not be completed within that period. I approach the question, therefore, from three points of view, and first upon the ground of economy. The present system is distinctly wasteful and extravagant. A moderate capital expenditure in certain well-selected cases would largely reduce the lodging allowance, the cost of transport, and the enormous annual charge for repairs. I approach it, secondly, on the ground of military efficiency. To break up a battalion by sending it in detachments into isolated quarters is disastrous to this efficiency, while the concentration in our great military camps of larger bodies of troops would tend to their greater utility for the support of the Civil power, if required, and to their more complete preparation for times of emergency. And, lastly, it can hardly be asserted that we are justified in exposing our soldiers to the discomforts, and, in some cases, to the dangers, which prevail in some of our existing barracks. For these reasons we have examined the barrack accommodation of this country as a whole ; and though the scheme of this year will not profess to deal with all parts of it, it will include the more important cases from the three points of view which I have mentioned. It will be embodied in a proposal which will shortly be presented to Parliament ; and though it would not be right to detain the Committee by dwelling upon its details, I have already indicated the lines upon which we propose to work. We shall put forward no fancy schemes of reconstruction and no wild Estimates, but only such proposals as can confidently be recommended to the House as absolutely necessary, in our opinion, to remove the present grave causes of complaint, or to improve the efficiency of our Army. And now, to deal generally with the whole subject, it is true that this year we have to ask, in peace time, for a considerable increase of our Estimates. I have attempted to give the Committee a full explanation of our grounds for this demand. And this, at least, we

may urge in our own support—for two years we have had no Supplementary Estimates. It proves, as I venture to urge, that we have prepared our Estimates with care and foresight, and administered the funds intrusted to us with economy and prudence. The experience of the past is an earnest for the future, and we look with confidence to the general acceptance of proposals which are, in our opinion, essential to the proper land defences of the country.

*MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): I merely rise to ask whether the scheme for new barrack accommodation which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to lay before Parliament—a scheme involving large expenditure—will be in addition to the Army Estimates of the year?

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Proposals will be made to Parliament; I cannot say the amount of expenditure just now, and it is not proposed to make a charge upon the Estimates.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): In the remarks the Secretary for War has addressed to the Committee, the right hon. Gentleman has almost entirely confined himself to the organization and reconstruction of the military system. He has—and I imagine purposely—not gone into the question of the *personnel* of the Army, the Militia, or the Volunteers. With the permission of the Committee I will draw attention to a few points connected with the Militia. The Militia Force of the country occupies a very prominent part in any scheme of National defence, and its efficiency is therefore a matter of National importance. The Secretary for War must be perfectly aware the condition of the Militia is not satisfactory, although the Reports of Inspecting Officers may not, on the face of them, bear this appearance. I would say by way of preface to my remarks that I do not believe the question of the efficiency of the Militia is one of expenditure of money at all. Officers and men are perfectly well paid—it is a question of administration and properly utilizing what we already possess. In the first place I find that, according to the Returns for 1888, there were 383 vacancies in the commissioned ranks of the Militia; and, quite apart from the very serious nature of these figures, what is the actual state of military efficiency of the officers who do hold commissions in the Militia? They have a limited knowledge of drill; but I do not believe that Militia officers, as a body, are so highly skilled in military science as Volunteer officers. If I look to the Army List, I see that very few have qualified in examinations on tactics; and as for the higher branches of military training, field intrenchment, outpost duty, and the general operations of war beyond mere barrack parade movements, the Militia officers are on the whole, I believe, utterly ignorant. Now, is this a healthy state for officers of the Militia to be in? Turning from officers to men, the number of vacancies on the Establishment is even larger. At the same date, the training of 1888, there were no fewer than 17,827 wanting to complete the Establishment; that is equal to 20 strong battalions. Now, I observe, both in the Report of the Inspector General on Recruiting and in the Memorandum the right hon. Gentleman has laid before Parliament that Militia depôts are going to be revised, and it is quite obvious that that is necessary. It is absurd that the same Establishment should apply to regiments having their depôts in the great centres of population and to regiments which have their depôts in the middle of an agricultural county of large acreage and sparse population. It is quite possible that a great deal may be done in recruiting for the force by taking off the numbers in thinly populated districts and increasing the size and even the number of regiments in districts thickly populated. For example, I turn to the Annual Return for 1888 of the 3rd and 4th battalions of the Sutherland Highland Regiment. I find 266 men short in the 3rd battalion, and only 5 in the 4th battalion. What is the reason for this? The 3rd battalion is recruited in Stirlingshire, in mountainous or purely agricultural country, while the 4th battalion is recruited at Paisley, in the middle of a thickly populated district. Yet for years you have had the same estimate—800 men for each. This should not continue; the battalion with unfavourable opportunities for recruiting should not be placed in an inferior position to the town battalion. Again, speaking from some experience in this

matter, I offer another suggestion for consideration. I believe a great deal can be done in agricultural counties by localizing the companies. I am speaking not from theory, but from practical knowledge of the non-commissioned officers, privates, and the permanent staff. At present there is no encouragement for what I may call *camaraderie* in the Service. If two lads enlist from one village, in an agricultural county, it is almost certain that they will be divided, one in one company, one in another. The Militia training is hard work for 27 days, and it would be made far more pleasant and interesting to the men if this spirit of *camaraderie* existed in the company. I have made inquiries of men in my own company and asked, "Why don't you bring men to join you from your own neighbourhood?" The answer is, "So we would, only we know there is no chance of a friend coming into our company, and we should not have a chance of seeing each other during training." Not only that, but very often country lads are brought into the closest proximity with town recruits, with whom they have nothing in common. Different strata of the population are tapped in the towns and in agricultural districts. The agricultural recruit will probably be a well-conducted, steady young countryman, but the town recruit will very likely be drawn from the class of "roughs." If you put these together in the same room and the same bed—because, as the Secretary for War may not be aware, in all cases where men are billeted out two sleep in one bed—it very often happens, when the country lad finds himself in the uncongenial company of the low rough, he gets disgusted, gets a sovereign any way he can and buys himself out of the Militia. You might obviate this by localizing the companies drawn from a certain circle of villages round a country town, and the roughs might form a company of their own. This is not such a bad arrangement as it might appear at first sight, for although you have the rough town element, you also get the most intelligent non-commissioned officers from town, and the one element would counteract the other. I offer this suggestion for the right hon. Gentleman's consideration. I would also ask him to look carefully into the statistics in the Report, because I think a little examination will cause him to feel a doubt whether the non-efficiency is not entirely caused by want of zeal or capacity on the part of some of our public servants. If he will turn to the record of the two battalions of the Rifle Brigade — the 5th and 7th—he will see that the 5th battalion has only 13 men wanted to complete it, while the 7th wants 114 men. Yet both these battalions are Tower Hamlets Militia, the one wanting 13 men for completion having its headquarters in Victoria Square, the other in Dalston. How is this to be explained? If you turn to the figures and make a similar comparison in the matter of absenteeism, you find that the total number in 1888 was 9,084. These are not the men who receive their 10s. on recruiting and never return; they have gone through their 56 days' training and have cost the country £10 a head, and the amount lost — clean gone, thrown away — is nearly £100,000. I know this question of absenteeism has received much attention, and underlying it is the question of how far want of supervision by officials is responsible. Here are three counties side by side—Hampshire, Dorsetshire, and Wiltshire—and you find the absenteeism is in Wiltshire 646, Dorsetshire 544, and in Hampshire 133, in a battalion of 1,093. My explanation is this—in the first place, the getting a sufficient number of men, and seeing they are of the right class, depends upon the zeal and capability of the recruiting officers, but much also depends upon the adjutant, who often looks upon the appointment as a good shunt, from which he looks forward to four weeks' hard work and eleven months' hunting and shooting. The result is, we have a deficiency of 17,000, and absentees nearly 10,000. I believe a really efficient adjutant could reduce the percentage of absenteeism to a minimum. My complaint is, there is no difference made at the Horse Guards between the zealous and the careless officer. Whether an officer does or does not bring up his regiment to a state of efficiency, saving the country money and producing an efficient fighting force, seniority on the roster is only taken into account, and it often happens that the incompetent officer gets promotion sooner than the zealous, hard-working man. Some thing should be

done to give encouragement to the latter, and this is a matter well worth looking into at the Horse Guards. All these matters, which, after all, are vital to the Service, are supposed to be looked into at the annual inspection. But what is this? The General Officer comes down, the regiment is put through a series of absolutely useless parade movements, and whatever the regiment does, everybody is complimented on the performance, the General Officer goes to lunch with the regimental officers, then he goes through a perfunctory examination of the books, and all agree there never was a finer regiment. Perhaps he remarks in conversation, "I hope you have not many absentees?" The Colonel replies, "Well, it is a most extraordinary thing, but there are so many." "Dear me. Well, I hope you will not have so many next year." But never is any inquiry made why there are so many absentees. One of the precautions provided by the War Office against absenteeism is to require any man of doubtful appearance to produce a character. Well, I have looked through many of these and found them most transparent forgeries. Is it conceivable that a proper system should allow such things to go on? I would respectfully press this question of the Militia, as one not of money, but of administration, and I would urge the right hon. Gentleman to appoint a Committee to inquire into these regulations and the manner in which they are carried out, to revise the system of training, and generally to look into the system of Militia administration, and I believe, if the subject were dealt with with that ability with which the field exercises for the Army were recently laid down, there would certainly be a great gain to the country. Now, a word on the training of the men, because, after all, that is the way to make them efficient in a short period. I say nothing of the equipment, though that is not all that might be desired. I say nothing about the absolute want of Commissariat or Medical Staff required to make the Militia an efficient force. What I would draw attention to is the training, and I am bound to say a great deal of the 27 days is lost time. A competent committee should decide exactly what is to be done in the 27 days, and everything not of the first importance should be omitted. I am quite certain that if this were looked at by some of the officers who drew up the "Field Exercises" recently brought out, very great changes would be made in the training. There is a general instruction that almost all the drill book should be turned through in 27 days, but no planning at how to get the best results from the time at disposal. To nothing does this apply so much as to musketry. What is the use of a militiaman who has never fired a shot in his life? Yet in the figures for 1887 I find 5,000 who never handled a rifle, and 7,000 supposed to be trained had never been near a target. I make these suggestions which, if I had had the opportunity, I would have made the subject of a Motion. I have touched on various matters of organization and administration but slightly, but if they were gone into by a competent committee I am sure valuable results would follow the inquiry.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S): I think the noble Lord will admit that it would be hardly fair to the Secretary of State, after the very interesting statement he has made, to allow the attention of the Committee to be diverted to a question, no doubt of great importance, but more suitable to the Militia Vote than to a general discussion on the Army. I would not have ventured to take part in the discussion had it not been that, having been a member of the Committee which sat on Army matters, I had certain opportunities of making myself acquainted with questions which unfortunately were not open to many Members of that House, but which are of great value for the purpose of obtaining knowledge as to the manner in which War Office matters are conducted. In commencing my remarks I have great pleasure in expressing my own opinion, and I think that of nearly every one present, as to the extremely satisfactory character of the statement made by the Secretary of State on the Army Estimates. I have listened to similar statements since I have been in Parliament, but never to one more interesting than that with which the Committee has been favoured, or on the whole more satisfactory. It is perfectly clear to me that the War Office

have been exceptionally energetic in the last year, and that they have done their very best to organize and utilize all the resources and forces at their disposal; and I think the Secretary of State would be inclined to admit that his hands in all this work have been greatly strengthened by the proceedings of the Committee of last Session and the year before. That Committee brought to bear not only Parliamentary influence but public opinion upon the somewhat rusty machinery of the War Office, and now we see in the evident signs of activity and originality in the proceedings of the War Office the effect of the pressure of that Committee upon public opinion. I gather that the Government do not intend to reappoint the Committee on the Army Estimates this Session. I do not complain of that; I think the Committee went as far as it is possible for a Committee to go, and that it would be detrimental perhaps to departmental efficiency if the Committee were to be reappointed. All I would say is that if we are not to have a Committee, I hope the Government will provide, with regard to the Army and Navy Estimates, that there shall be a regular and continuous discussion in the House of Commons, and that the House will not be satisfied with merely this night's debate and then forget all Army questions, but that the Government will initiate, and the House carry on and conclude, full and regular discussions on these subjects before the Session has reached a very advanced stage. I desire to say a word now on a scheme which I believe I was the first to suggest—namely, the practice of the Secretary of State for War issuing to Parliament a prefatory memorandum before the annual presentation of the Estimates, containing a general review of Army affairs, which used formerly to be left solely to the speech of the Minister. The Secretary of State appears to intimate that he does not much admire this new practice, and that it may be discontinued. I hope it will not. I myself attach the greatest importance to this memorandum, which binds the Department more than any speech, which is readily acceptable, which can be more easily referred to than the pages of *Hansard*, and from which there can be no escape on the ground of omissions or mis-reports. Therefore, I venture to express the opinion, that much the right hon. Gentleman told us to-night might have been conveniently embodied in a memorandum similar to that which was issued last year. The Estimates show an increase of expenditure, but, though I deplore an increase of expenditure on armaments, justice and common sense compel me to admit that this increase could not be avoided, being due mainly to the increased provision for colonial garrisons, and to the re-arming of our troops with the new rifle. The policy of fortifying our stations abroad was adopted by Parliament—perhaps somewhat lightly—a few years ago, and the increase of the garrisons now proposed is only part of the same policy. It is therefore impossible for any Member to quarrel with the increased expenditure proposed for the purpose, seeing that the policy is one which was deliberately adopted by Parliament. As to the new rifle, that was inevitable. It is only to be regretted that the War Office have been so very deliberate about it. I do not think there is any economy in postponing what must be done, and it would have been better for the country and for the Army if the decision with regard to the new rifle could have been come to earlier. Against this increase, however, I am willing to give the War Department credit for the disappearance during the past two years of Supplementary Estimates, and I hope they will never again reappear, save in the case of emergencies which could not have been foreseen. The Secretary of State omitted from his speech certain subjects on which I imagine the Committee would like to have information. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the provisions made for the defence of our ports at home by means of submarine mines, and plans for having 80,000 men in readiness for the defence of any point that might be attacked. I presume that he means militia and regulars combined?

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: No; regulars alone.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: It is a point to be considered how far the right hon. Gentleman is strengthening the hands of his colleague at the head of the Admiralty by this statement, for our means of defence on land must, of course,

have some bearing on the regulation of our naval force. What I desire to point out is that the right hon. Gentleman has omitted to mention whether these 80,000 men are to be in addition to the two Army Corps to which in last year's statement the right hon. Gentleman devoted the main portion of his memorandum. I should like to know whether these two Army Corps are in existence ready to be mobilized for the use of the country, and available to be sent wherever they may be wanted at reasonably short notice, and also whether, besides these two Army Corps and these 80,000 men, provision is also made for reinforcements in India in the event of India requiring military reinforcements. These are points which require elucidation if the Committee is to be placed in possession of what is our full military strength. Then there is another subject upon which the Secretary of State did not say much—namely, the provision of new Artillery for the Forces in the field. I should be glad to learn to what extent the Artillery is being armed with the new 12-pounder field gun.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I stated that before long there will be 45 batteries armed with this gun.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: Then I will leave that subject, apologising for my mistake, and I will go to another question of the greatest importance of all, namely, the supply of Heavy Ordnance. The First Lord of the Admiralty, the other night, stated that steps had been taken, in conjunction with the War Office, to remove what has been called the block in the supply of guns. This is a satisfactory statement; but it would be more satisfactory if we could be told exactly what these steps are. I think the Secretary of State has informed the House, on more than one occasion, that he has taken a new departure, and that he is now relying less upon Woolwich and more upon other sources.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I mentioned that we had entered into contracts with four firms.

AN HON. MEMBER: Give their names.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: I think this is a matter upon which the Secretary of State should supply the Committee with a little more information. I think the Committee are entitled to receive a full and clear statement as to what steps the War Office have taken in regard to the supply of guns, and generally, what are the sources to which we can look for supplying the country with such guns as we may require. I now come to another matter, which is also a matter of great importance, and upon which the Secretary of State touched towards the conclusion of his remarks—namely, the important subject of barrack accommodation. After hearing the evidence given before the Committee that sat some time ago—especially that of Sir Lothian Nicholson, the Inspector-General of Fortifications and Barracks—I am convinced that the House of Commons must be prepared for a large expenditure in the provision of better barrack accommodation. Most of the present accommodation is insanitary, detrimental to the health, and certainly, in a still greater degree, to the comfort, of the troops. Many barracks are in such bad repair that it would be almost more economical to rebuild them. By far the most advisable plan would be to build large barracks in central places, where troops could be congregated together, instead of barracks dotted all over the country. This would be far more economical, and the facilities of railway communication obviate any objections that might otherwise be urged as to the necessity of military force being available to support local authority. I do not know what the demands of the Secretary of State may be. Sir Lothian Nicholson estimates the cost at four or five millions; but my own advice to the right hon Gentleman would be to be bold and frank with the House of Commons, and make such a demand as would give a guarantee that the question would be dealt with in such a manner that it would not have to be taken in hand again largely for one generation or even two. Though I deprecate all expenditure which is in any degree unnecessary, I have never opposed and never will oppose wise expenditure, and I am certain that an improvement of the barrack accommodation of the British Army is absolutely required, and would be productive, if wisely carried out, of very great economy. There is only one further remark which I desire to make. I recollect an observation which was made by the right hon. Gentleman about eighteen months ago, that by a Royal

Warrant he had thrown on the military authorities the duty of preparing the Estimates for the year. I want now to ask the Secretary of State whether Estimates have been prepared by the military authorities, for which they may be held responsible, and which they consider necessary to secure the efficiency of the Army and the safety of the country, because, if so, it marks a reform in our War Office administration for which I have long been anxious—a reform, namely, in the direction of throwing financial responsibility on the professional heads of the Army. I hope that on that point also, the Secretary of State will deal frankly with the Committee, and subject to that interrogatory and the remarks I have made, I have again to tender to my right hon. Friend my hearty congratulations on the satisfactory statement he has made.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I listened to the noble Lord, as I always do, with great pleasure; but I witnessed his sitting down with some dismay, because I thought we should have got some sort of a speech from him of a different nature from that with which he has favoured the Committee. I will tell the noble Lord why. The noble Lord expressed satisfaction with the policy of the Government, and, in one respect, I cordially endorse that remark. I agree with the noble Lord that, taking our military organization and our system as it is, there never was a time when the work of the War Office was done more intelligently or more strenuously; but in another point I cannot agree with the satisfaction the noble Lord has expressed. As an economist, the noble Lord was very much dissatisfied with the Estimates last year.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: In what respect?

*Sir G. TREVELYAN: I remember some remarks of the noble Lord with regard to the provision for two Army Corps at an enormous expenditure. With those remarks I thoroughly agree; and it is most important that every one who reads the speech of the Secretary of State should see to what a point of expenditure we are rapidly going, apparently to the satisfaction of everybody concerned. With some of the causes of increase I thoroughly agree; but I wish to point out that the system under which our Army is conducted is such that an extremely able staff of administrators at the War Office, adding very few men to our fighting strength, are obliged to increase our Army Estimates from £16,000,000 to £16,700,000. The noble Lord said last year that for this gigantic expenditure we only got two Army Corps that could be sent on foreign service; and he asks why we have heard no more of those two Army Corps. Personally, I am very glad that the Committee have heard nothing more of them; for I believe the enormous disproportion of result and expenditure on our Army is derived from the fact that our military organization under the right hon. Gentleman and all his Predecessors has been laid down on false lines—that is, the idea that the military necessities are of the same nature now as they were 70 or 80 years ago, when we could throw 30,000 to 40,000 men on to the Continent, who might really turn the tide of war, whereas now, I believe, our true policy is boldly to recognize the impossibility of our ever again placing Army Corps in line with the great Continental armies, and to apply the ability of our administrators to moulding together all the branches of our Army, the Militia, and Volunteers for the purposes of home defence, the defence of India, and our maritime Colonies. Just see what is the result of what we are doing now. These Estimates amount to £16,700,000. I take off £2,000,000, as representing the cost of the Volunteers and the Militia, and that is making a very large deduction. I am willing to take off whatever the right hon. Gentleman wishes, but I find that, even with that large reduction, we are brought face to face with the remarkable fact that, for an expenditure of £14,000,000 a year, we can only place in the field of battle in our own country 80,000 Regular troops.

*Mr. E. STANHOPE: No, no.

*Sir. G. TREVELYAN: The right hon. Gentleman told us that those 80,000 would be composed of Regulars alone, and I want to know what force we can place in time of battle. Foreign countries, such as France and Germany, with Estimates hardly larger than our own, could place 500,000 in the field, at the very least. I presume that the 80,000 includes the Army Reserve, with the Garrisons, but I do not know

whether it also includes the Militia Reserve. That, however, is a very important point. If it does, I must call the attention of the Committee to the state which we are in at the present moment. It means that we must in time of crisis take 30,000 men from the Militia, which would ruin it as a fighting force. I believe that the military authorities drifted from the true military system when they amalgamated the English and the Indian Armies. There never can be a proper military system until there is an Army for home defence, an Army of short service, an Army which would always remain inside the country—every man of it. If the home and the foreign Army are divided, it will be possible to deal with the great question of the difference between the two great classes of men who desire to join the Army. In old days, the Indian Government had never any difficulty in getting recruits. They appealed to that peculiar and numerous class of men who wished permanently to take up a military career, and not to stop at home in their native villages. But there is the still more numerous class who have a taste for a little drill, and who would join the Army if they could leave at the end of three years, and might rely on not having to leave the country for unhealthy climates. From these classes may be provided an Indian and Colonial Army of professional soldiers and a home Army of citizen soldiers. If there were behind these the Militia Reserve and the Volunteers, dangers from an invader would be at an end. It would be the invader who would have to be pitied. Let us have two Armies, so that we may know how many men we can rely upon in each quarter of the globe, and then our Army will be on that natural footing from which alone some large economy can be hoped for. In addition to that, we shall feel that if the first line of defence—the Navy—is broken, we shall be in a good position to meet an invader. Now, I was much disappointed that economy did not form the subject of a very large part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. Let no one think that there are not economies to be made in the Army. I watched the Committee which sat on the Army Estimates with the greatest interest as an Army reformer of 20 years' standing, and I found, to my great delight, that more progress was made in six months by means of the exertions of that Committee than had been made in the 20 years previous. But although on a most important point the Committee had come to a most important conclusion, nothing of it has been heard from the right hon. Gentleman. I have never been in the War Office, but from my long experience in the Admiralty I know perfectly well that economies cannot be suggested from the outside, but must be made from the inside. [Lord R. CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] But the removal of one tremendous abuse, unparalleled in any other service in the world, can be suggested from the outside. On pages 96 and 97 of the Estimates it will be found that the list of active generals eligible for employment is 151, whereas the number of generals actually employed is 83. In a well-organized service rank ought to mean employment; unless that is the case the service cannot be in a healthy condition. The Committee reported that the present state of things should be put a stop to; but more important than the Report of the Committee was the evidence given before it. In his defence of the system His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge admitted that in Germany there was a much larger Army, and there were comparatively few generals unemployed. "But," he added—

"in Germany every two regiments of cavalry have a brigadier, every two regiments of infantry have a brigadier, and every four regiments of infantry have a general of division, so that they can employ many more than we can."

This sounds well; but we must remember that a German regiment consists of three battalions. Does anyone believe that if we had six English battalions employed on active service there would not be a brigadier to command them; or if there were 12 English battalions employed on active service there would not be a general of division to command them? His Royal Highness continued—

"Our armies go all over the world, and climate has a good deal to do with it. If you send a man abroad upon a foreign station he breaks down in health very soon in some cases, so that you must have a large number (of generals) for all requirements, taking into account India, the tropics, and the Colonies."

But if a crisis comes the spare generals are not the ones called upon; colonels, men deserving promotion, are made temporary generals and are paid as such, while 70 or 80 generals are not employed at all. What would hon. Gentleman think of such a system in any other service in the world? In the other ranks of the Army what takes place? The half-pay voted for generals amounts to the enormous total of £93,000, and that for 7,000 officers of other ranks amounted to only £36,000. In the rest of the Army the half-pay is only about one-third of the amount for the generals' list, and, therefore, the system is recognized as untenable in the Army at large. Of the major-generals, the youngest most certainly ought to be those to be employed; but I find that of the 24 lowest on the list, 18 are unemployed, and two of those employed are equerries. Of the lieutenant-generals, out of the last 18, 14 are unemployed. On the other hand, on the list of colonels a great number will be found who are commanding brigades, and—in some recent cases, at any rate, if not now—divisions. These men are selected for such service because they are the men who can be best trusted at the time of need; and, therefore, they should be made generals. The list of generals ought to be exactly as large as the service of the country requires, but if not exactly in correspondence, then smaller, because in time of war as many posts as possible should be filled by the young and energetic colonels. The present system is bad for the generals, and terribly bad for the country, for I have not stated its worst economic results. If hon. Members look at page 100 of the Estimates, they will find that £266,600 a year is spent on retired pay of generals. It is obvious that this enormous sum is more than twice what it would be if the list of generals was cut down to a half, that is to say, to the requirements of the country. I do not wish to argue this question from the point of economy only, but from the point of view of the efficiency of the service. The service will never be really efficient from the top to the bottom until rank means definite duties which have to be done for sufficient pay and sufficient honour. But that will not take place until we begin with the highest rank, that of generals. Lord Wolseley, in giving evidence before the Select Committee on Army Estimates, said:—

"My idea would be that when a position among the general officers employed became vacant the Commander-in-Chief should select the best colonel who, in his opinion, would be the best man to put into that place and make him a general. . . . At the present moment, a man who may be a very good man, may be employed on the staff of the Army for five years, and at the expiration of five years there being so many other generals to be employed, it may be necessary to let him remain on half-pay three or four years unemployed, when he forgets a great deal of the useful experience which he had acquired during his term of office. I believe, having once selected a man to be a general, and assuming him to be a very good man, the more constantly you employed him the better it would be in the interests of the Army and of the State."

Now, I believe, that instead of being an easy-going career which requires only second-rate qualities, the military calls out the most remarkable combination of intellectual and moral qualities to be met with in connection with any duty in the world. Conceive the result of a man having a break of four, five, or six years in such a career. The country has paid in one form or another £10,000,000 for the abolition of purchase—£7,000,000 for the regulation price and £3,000,000 for the over regulation price. Three and a-half per cent. upon £10,000,000 is £350,000 a year, and every penny of that amount goes into the pockets of officers of the present. Although the abolition of purchase has been of enormous advantage to the present officers it has not been of advantage to the nation, unless the nation, having bought the right to manage its own Army, is allowed to manage it on business principles, which I maintain are likewise Army principles. Lord Wolseley when before the Select Committee, was asked by my right hon. Friend the Member for S. Edinburgh (Mr. Childers)—

"I thought selection was to be and had been for many years the main guide for promotion in the Army?—It has never been laid down; it certainly has not been the practice. Was not the understanding when purchase was done away with that selection was to be the main basis on which promotion was to be carried on?"

"I think," said Lord Wolseley, "that it was a popular idea." That is a mild way of putting it. There was an absolute bargain between the nation and the authorities of the Army that the nation should have the most absolute

power over the Army, but the Commander-in-Chief now comes forward and defends the present system, with its very large list of generals, by saying that these were men who had claims of promotion. I know of no man in any department of the State who has any claim to promotion, unless the services calling for promotion are needed by the demands of the country. General Trochu, speaking of the French Army, said:—

"In the French Army, which had solid principles of honesty, we apply to the administration of all the material—arms, clothes, equipment—an inconceivable abundance of cares and checks and precautions against fraud and error. But very little attention is paid to the distribution of promotion, which is the corner-stone of the military edifice. The rules for promotion offer sufficient guaranteees to the individual officer, but not to the State and the country, which have so high an interest in the officering and command of our Armies."

I rather think we are in the habit of choosing officers for promotion to the rank of general, with a view to their claims and requirements, and not primarily the requirements and the good of the country. I should like to know whether the best men are chosen for the command of battalions, which in time of peace is a matter of enormous administrative and economical importance, and in time of war is fraught with issues of life and death? I do not believe the selection is carried out on the right principle, because in choosing our generals other considerations are looked to, apart from whether a man will be able adequately to fill the place. My right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) has done a great deal in this matter. There are many hon. Members who can remember the awful condition of the Generals' List, with its 700 or 800 real, retired, active, English, Indian, Marine Generals, all jumbled up together, so that the civilian critic could not find out without the greatest difficulty what the state of the case was. My right hon. Friend reduced the list to 142 generals; but I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the time has not now come when, with the universal assent, not only of economists, but of military men who are desirous for the efficiency of the Army, he may apply to the List of Generals that principle which has never been applied strictly and severely up to this moment—that no man shall go on to the List except for the purpose of holding the position and performing the duties which are attached to it, and that while he remains on the List and until he becomes unable from age to serve, he shall be employed continuously in general's duties. I have now to thank the Committee for having heard me on the subject, which is one in which I have taken great personal interest.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: To the several points that have been raised it may be desirable that I should now make some reply. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division has brought forward his ideas on a certain number of subjects which have long engaged his attention; for instance, the General Officers' List he, for a long time passed, has considered excessive, and he has advocated its reduction. Well, the Government also has that view, that the list is excessive, and I hope within a short time to lay before the House proposals for its reduction. But at the same time the Committee will understand it is a matter in which there must necessarily be some delay though I had hoped to have had our proposals ready now. I find, however, I must plead for a little more delay, say for a week or two, when I hope to make my explanation. This I may now say, that we hope to introduce the principle of pure selection. No appointments will be made except upon this principle and promotion by seniority will disappear. No man will become a general officer unless he has been selected as a fit man altogether to hold the position. And now I turn to other matters of detail, several of which have been put to me by the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill). I have first of all to thank him for the cordial support he has given me on the question of barrack accommodation. I admit the enormous importance of the subject; the evidence given before the Committee upstairs ought to convince everybody of this, and I shall be glad to have the opportunity of saying what in the view of myself and my colleagues is the remedy we think should be applied for carrying out the recommendation of the Committee, the remedy for an evil we all believe to be a crying one. In regard to the preparation of these Estimates my noble Friend asks

me a direct question, he asks whether they are the Estimates of the military authorities, or my own. I answer him equally directly, and say they are the Estimates of the Government not of the military authorities. The military authorities, according to the rule now in force, have submitted to me what they thought would be necessary for the services of the year; but I do not at all wish to shrink from my responsibility. This year we have had what appeared to be special opportunities for considering these Estimates and of satisfying all demands. A Committee of the Cabinet specially charged with the examination of the question has been sitting out the winter, and I can safely say that every representation made by the military authority has been thoroughly examined by myself and my colleagues, and the result is that the Estimates we present proceed from the joint authority of the Government, and are what we believe essential for the defence of the country. Then my noble Friend asks me as to the two Army Corps for Foreign Service. Well, I have certainly not desired to dwell on that point to-day, because the point to which I have specially directed attention during the past year has been the organization of the Army for home defence. Of course I do not ignore, and have not forgotten, the necessity that might arise for sending a portion of that Army abroad, but I admit frankly and freely to the Committee that our preparations for this purpose are not so forward as those in relation to home defence. I fully admit the importance of the point raised, but my attention has been specially directed to making the Army thoroughly efficient for home defence. I have not lost sight of the other question, though I fully admit that we could not without delay, I will not say considerable delay, but a delay longer than I care to contemplate send two Army Corps on foreign service. Then I am asked as to what has been done in reference to guns to remove the block there has been on the supply. We have thoroughly examined this matter, and we have satisfied ourselves that by the new arrangements made, and about to be made, we can provide against this block and enable guns to be supplied for both the Army and Navy without any inadequate delay, and with a certain punctuality for land and sea service. Of course the noble Lord does not wish me to refer to the special conditions of contract.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Are they not known?

*MR. STANHOPE: Not yet. The Committee will understand my reluctance to offer special encouragement to any one firm, and I may say that we require specific assurance before we accept all that is said in respect to offers. But I think on reviewing the whole position the difficulty is removed. Guns are coming in steadily and well, and throughout the course of the year they will be coming in in increasing numbers. Even the guns asked for in the near Naval Programme are insignificant in number compared with the total number to be provided for the land and sea services. I think it has been mentioned that the number is only 58 big guns required for the sea service.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: That does not include the Reserve.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: No; but I do not think that is a very large proportion—it is equal, I am told, to another eighth. But it is not a very formidable programme; the only formidable matter was the production of the very large guns and this we are prepared to meet. We understand what the gun-producing power of the country is not only in the Government factories, but by private firms, and we are convinced of our ability to provide the whole of the guns required for the Navy within the time laid down by my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty. I don't think I need detain the Committee any longer just now.

*MR. PICTON (Leicester): I think it is only right that the attention of the Committee should be invited to a point of view different to any yet taken, and which, perhaps, will scarcely commend itself to the sympathies of the majority in the House. I had hoped that the noble Lord, the Member for Paddington, would have assumed a more critical tone than he has thought proper to adopt. I was one of those who sat on the Committee under his able presidency. Surely he cannot have forgotten the portentous facts that were brought before us in evidence, some, indeed, he has alluded to. He cannot have forgotten how we learned that for

a cost very little exceeding what we are called upon to pay the Empire of Germany is enabled to put three-quarters of a million of men into the field; that under the German system no man is ever appointed to the position of general until he has a general's work to do and can do it; that our paymaster system is most extravagant; nor can he have forgotten the grave defects in our Intelligence Department, which is nearly starved. There are more materials in the evidence than have been made use of, and I think the noble Lord would have done good service if he had pressed these points on the attention of the Government. But I am not going to dwell on these details. I listened to both statements made by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanhope), and they were both marked with ability; but I must honestly say I liked the second and shorter speech better than the former and more elaborate speech. In it he showed himself more decidedly the advocate of administrative reform, which we know him to be. I am rejoiced to find that he hopes to bring before the House in a short time a scheme for a reduction of that intolerable surplus of General Officers under which we groan. I only wish that he had added that he could see his way to adopt a system, which I believe obtains everywhere else that no one shall be appointed to the position of general until there is a general's work for him to do. The more laborious statement of the right hon. Gentleman lacked nothing in clearness or interest, and I am glad to join with others in admiration of its ability— business-like it undoubtedly was, but I think it was somewhat cold and unfeeling when we think of the dreadful preparations with which he was dealing. I believe we shall never deal rightly or fairly with the dreadful busi- of war until everyone who has to bring forward any proposal for increased armaments shows that he personally regards such a necessity with pain and even horror, and regrets the misappropriation and waste of the resources of the nation. The right hon. Gentleman, in defence of the increase he proposes, alluded, among other things, to the fierce competition going on among the nations of the world. But what have we to do with this fierce competition? They are competing for nothing which we have the right to keep, or for our Possessions. [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] They will not meddle with us if we meddle not with them. If we show ourselves antagonistic to their natural aspirations or are determined to meddle with their intrigues one with the other, of course they will take revenge by showing us they can do us damage in some remote quarter of the Queen's dominions; but apart from that what foreign Power desires to compete for any of our Possessions? I contend we have nothing to do with the fierce competition going on among the nations of the world. We ought to stand absolutely apart, serene and secure on our own peaceful policy and sound commercial doctrine. Our position should be like that of the United States, whose people have better sense than to waste their wealth on preparations that may never be needed. The increase the right hon. Gentleman proposes I am prepared to dispute, and I shall take a division on it. From the way in which the right hon. Gentleman spoke we might imagine ourselves on the eve of a great European war. He talked of arrangements to meet great emergencies, of the possibilities of invasion, and the necessity of defending London by field works. But I see nothing in the state of the world affecting us to justify such a tone; and I am afraid speech and action such as this tends to make peace less secure. The right hon. Gentleman assured us that forts would not be necessary for the defence of the Metropolis, and I am glad to hear that. But he went on to say that field works might be necessary, and the land, to enable such to be readily thrown up, would cost £20,000. Now, is not the use of money in such a way absolute waste? Who, in the case of actual invasion, would question that any Government would be absolutely justified in taking any land required for such a purpose? But it is a far-off and almost impossible contingency. What excitement, grumbling, and denunciation there often is if a School Board in a large town proposes to spend £20,000 on a school building; but here is money to be devoted to the preparation for shedding blood, and no one seems to complain about it. I know this sort of thing is, to a certain extent, popular, and I much regret it. How-

ever little echo my voice may raise, I must needs protest against this continual increase in warlike preparations. I very much indeed regretted to hear the right hon. Gentleman allude to the possibility of troops being made available in case of civil disturbance, and say that this was one of the objects he kept in view in his contemplation of a re-arrangement of the barrack system. It is very much to be regretted that any such dire allusion should be made at a time like this. Why, we know that our people are the most peaceable and orderly in the world, and that if there is anything like riot or disturbance there is a cause for it that needs other treatment than bludgeon and bayonet. When I heard the right hon. Gentleman talk of possible civil disturbance and such a re-arrangement as would facilitate the concentration of troops in case of invasion, I could not help thinking of the policy that requires 30,000 or more troops to be concentrated in Ireland. In the present state of things, can those troops be made available for repelling an invasion of Great Britain? If that is to be so we must adopt a very different policy indeed towards that country. In fact, here on the discussion of these Army Estimates the country can realize afresh what a terrible loss we inflict upon ourselves by the insane policy we pursue across the St George's Channel. I need not allude further to the increase in the General Officers' List, for we have assurances that it will presently be diminished. But I may observe that on page 19 of the Estimates it will be seen that there were 249 last year, and there are 254 this year, and I do not quite understand how this should arise. I observe there is some reduction in the Army Pay Department which I welcome, and I note that the local Chaplains' Department is diminished by three, whether that is due to an improvement in the moral and religious tone of the Army, so that the services of fewer chaplains are required, I do not know; but, as these things do in a slight degree make for economy, I am glad to note them; but I must end by protesting against any increase in the army whatever. The increase now proposed is 2,615 men, of all ranks. The false assumptions as to the danger of war put forward to justify the increase are denied by the pacific assurance in Her Majesty's gracious Speech that Her relations continue to be entirely friendly with all the nations of the world. Under such circumstances I think it is impossible to justify this extra expenditure. We keep on adding a thousand now and a thousand then until we swell our armaments beyond anything at all needed, at great cost to the people of this country. Therefore, if I am in order, as I presume I shall be, I shall move the reduction of the number of men by 2,615, thus bringing back the number to what it was last year. I should very much like to move a reduction of 20,000, or even 50,000, but I do not want to appear unreasonable, and I simply ask the Committee not to affirm an increase in the Army beyond the total of last year, when our defence was perfectly satisfactory, and since which time I do not see that any danger of invasion has arisen to justify the increase.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That '149,667' men be maintained for the said Service."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

*General Sir F. FITZ WYGRAM (Hants, Fareham): I desire to call the attention of the Committee and the right hon. Gentleman to the very defective organization and condition of our cavalry regiments. We have 19 cavalry regiments on the Home Establishment, and of these seven are only half efficient and unable to stand the strain of a campaign, because they have no depôt and no reserve, and the other 12 regiments are utterly unfit for service in any war which might arise. I hold very strongly the opinion that every regiment ought at all times to be fit for war, and my humble opinion is we have too many skeleton regiments. I would remind the Committee that in the present day wars are very sudden, very sharp, and decisive, and to be of any service troops must be capable of being placed in the field at once. As regards these cavalry regiments it would be impossible to augment them at once on the outbreak of war in time for them to take part in a campaign. Private trade by means of registration might provide horses, but private trade can never supply trained dragoons. Therefore, every regiment ought at all times to be at its full strength, having its own reserve, and being able to maintain itself during the

progress of the campaign. An effective cavalry regiment ought to have an establishment of 670 men and 470 horses, divided into five squadrons, four for service and one for the depôt. Each service squadron should consist of 100 men and 100 horses, making 400 men and 400 horses, and the depôt, or fifth squadron, should consist of 270 men and 70 horses. Of the 270 men, probably 150 would be recruits, unfit to take part in the earlier portion of a campaign. The 120 trained men left behind would be engaged in training recruits and horses until such time as the casualties of war required that they should be sent on active service. Under this system I think you would make your cavalry an efficient force. As this would involve raising the amount of the Estimates, I, with some pain, would suggest that the number of regiments should be reduced by four. Exclusive of the Household troops, we have 19 regiments on the Home Estimates, of which, as I have said, seven are half efficient, and 12 wholly unfit for active service. To these seven I would add a fifth squadron. I would deal with the 12 regiments that were unfit for service by reducing four of them (450 men and 300 horses each), and by these means adding to each of the remaining eight a fifth squadron and 220 men and 170 horses, thus raising these regiments to the effective strength of 670 men and 470 horses. The result would be to make 15 regiments ready for war and to maintain themselves during war without being obliged to draw officers, horses, or men from regiments left at home. Cadres, or skeletons, of regiments were useful enough a hundred, or seventy, years ago, when wars grew up slowly and lasted for years, but now they are an antiquated, obsolete idea, for no regiment can be of use unless it can be placed in the field at the shortest notice. Drastic as these proposals may seem to be, they involve no further reduction than that of three commanding officers, for whom, no doubt, suitable employment might readily be found on the staff. As regards officers, there would be no reduction, but rather an increase by the addition of a fifth squadron to each of the 15 regiments, and as regards non-commissioned officers and men, there would be no reduction at all. As regards horses, raising the strength of the eight regiments to 470 horses would require a slight increase. The number required would be 1,370, of which 1,200 would be supplied by the four reduced regiments. I think it would be found that in working this scheme would give an efficient body of cavalry without increased cost to the Exchequer. In regard to this question of horses, I may be asked "What is the good of a dragoon without a horse?"—and I have proposed 670 men and only 470 horses. My answer to that is that the private trade of the country does not supply trained dragoons, while it can with a proper system of registration supply horses. But, more than that, whilst a dragoon will take at least a year to enlist and train and get ready for the field, a horse, if used to bit and bridle—and there are horses of that kind to be obtained in this country—can be taught to stand fire in a week, and can be taught, for all military purposes, to carry sword and kit in a fortnight at the outside. My idea as to cavalry horses is this, that we should keep the largest number of men that can be kept efficient on a given number of horses, and, conversely, that we should keep the smallest number of horses which, consistently with the efficiency of the dragoon, it is possible to keep for a given number of men. I think if you make inquiry you will find that all officers commanding cavalry regiments entertain this view, namely, that the essential part of a cavalry regiment is the trained dragoon and not the horse. A cavalry regiment can do with one-third less horses than men. There are always a number of "casualties" occurring every day—that is to say there are always each day a number of men who, from one cause or another, do not require a horse to ride on that particular day; and, generally speaking, the number of these casualties amounts to one-third the strength of the regiment. It is the duty of the officers commanding regiments to take care that all their men are kept efficient as dragoons, and with one-third less horses than men it is always possible to mount all the men three days in the week. I have made a rough estimate of the daily casualties. Of recruits there would probably be 150, and as two recruits can ride one horse, I put the number of horses down at 75. Officers' servants, 50, are kept well in exercise by riding

the officers' horses and chargers, and amongst the "casualties" I have referred to I include the men who have to be instructed in various classes, and these I put down at 25 per day. I knock off 5 per cent to cover the sick list; the number wanting to complete 1 per cent; cooks, 11; men for officers and sergeants' mess, 5; canteen, 2; barrack police, 2; guard, 4; staff sergeants, 6; tradesmen, 8; orderlies, 2; riding establishment, 11. I reckon that altogether there are 245 men who do not require a horse to ride on any given day. Well, subtracting these 245 men from 670, it leaves 425 men for whom I suggest there should be an establishment of 470 horses. It may now be asked, "Why, after what you have said, provide more horses than are necessary for the men to ride?" The answer to that is that 50 is a very moderate number of horses to provide for casualties, which must always occur amongst horses. Some horses will be sick, some will be kicked, and about 25 are, generally speaking, throughout the year what we call young horses in training. So far as regards the establishment of the regiments I may be told we have a reserve. Well, I know we have a reserve, but speaking from my own experience on the matter, this reserve is a delusion and a snare. Men serve in a cavalry regiment for four or five years, when they pass into civil life. When they have ceased to be soldiers they take what employment they can get, and that is, mostly, situations as drivers, or situations in which they have to do with horses, but very few of them ever have to get outside a horse, and the consequence is that they very soon lose their riding and become stiff, and though they may be retrained yet they would not be fit for immediate service in any campaign. The Germans acknowledge this thoroughly, and have a cavalry reserve, as we have, but they do not reckon on that as available in any occurring campaign. They send them to the cavalry depôts to be retrained in the event of a war lasting more than a year. My object in this matter is to serve the interests of the cavalry and the nation, and in conclusion I repeat again that I believe—nay, I know I am positive—that this nation would be far better served by having 15 regiments always effective and ready with full strength for war than by having seven regiments not really fit and 12 regiments not only not really fit, but which could not possibly be made fit in time for any sudden emergency.

*Mr. KENRICK (Birmingham, N): Being a civilian. I do not propose to go into questions affecting the Army and its administration in any detail; but there is one point upon which, I think, I may be allowed to speak, and upon which I think I may ask for an announcement of principle from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. Before I come to that, however, I desire to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on what I understand to be the prospective arrangement as to the Volunteers. I have always regarded the Volunteers as a very useful force, and one not made so much of as it might be; but I admit that it must always be considered as an ineffective force until it is mobilized and has its transport and commissariat. As I understand the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State, his proposition, in future, is to mobilize the Volunteer Force; and, if that be so, I congratulate him on turning this valuable arm, from an arm not thoroughly effective, into a comparatively effective one. The point I wish more particularly to deal with is as to the supply of warlike stores, and I am glad to find the Secretary of State for War sees the advantage of having a number of manufacturers for the supply of the new magazine rifle in this country. He is now drawing very largely from the Royal factory at Enfield, from the Royal factory at Birmingham, and he is also drawing from the private factories of Birmingham and London, and he says he does not find these means of obtaining the rifle too many for the supply he requires. Then he laid down a principle with regard to swords and bayonets, which appears to me, in connection with the Army, to be a sound principle. There are two principles upon which you may obtain a supply of any material you want, warlike or otherwise, and one is the economical one of going to the cheapest market, regardless of any other circumstance, and the other is the one now to be laid down, I understand—namely, that with regard to warlike stores, reliance shall be placed upon British labour to supply

the needs of the country, and that we shall not go outside the British Empire to give contracts to foreign nations. Well, if that is the principle to be relied on, what I have to say is that it should e carried out to its logical conclusion, and that we should no longer go to Solingen for sword-blades or bayonets. I do not blame the right hon. Gentleman for going to Solingen in the past, for it has been necessary to do so. I have taken trouble to inquire into the matter, and I find that the number of swords required in ordinary times by Her Majesty's Government has been so few that their supply would not have kept one sword forger in any one factory in Birmingham in full work. All orders hitherto, it seems, had been sent, I do not say to Solingen, but to London sword cutlers, who themselves imported the blades from Germany and fitted them with handles. Our patriotic officers in the Army and Volunteer Forces have apparently been under the impression that they have been buying English swords when, as a matter of fact, they have been purchasing German weapons fitted with English handles. I am glad, however, to hear in the interests of what I may even call the security and safety of the State that in future the Government intend to encourage manufacturers to manufacture these warlike arms and stores within the United Kingdom. But it seems to me that in the first endeavour to do this, they have not been altogether successful. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War referred to the contract given to Messrs. Wilkinson, of London, but we know now, owing to a question put in this House, that there are no such persons as Messrs. Wilkinson, but that the firm trading under that name have a branch at Solingen, and that they employ German artizans in this country. The impression amongst the English artizans engaged in the cutlery trade is that all these sword bayonets ordered by the Government are being imported from Germany though supplied by what purports to be an English firm. If this is the case, I contend that it would be much better to send the order direct to Germany, as in that case the action of the Government would not give rise to false expectations, and so avoid the sense of injury which in some instances the working classes labour under in this country at present. I maintain that it is desirable that there should not be the shadow of a shade of an excuse for jealousy in these matters. There is an impression that in high quarters in the Army there is a prejudice in favour of German arms. ["No, no."] Well, I do not say that that is the fact, I only say that such an impression exists. It is unfortunate that while the Government are professing to act on the principle that these warlike stores shall be manufactured in England, there is some doubt, after all, as to whether they are not manufactured in and exported from Germany. I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War will be able to set this doubt at rest. I can assure him that it has caused a good deal of apprehension and irritation not only in the constituency I have the honour to represent, but also amongst the workmen generally throughout the country.

CAPTAIN SELWYN (Cambridge, Wisbeach): I am glad that good progress has been made in the preparation of the plant for the manufacture of these new magazine rifles. I would venture to ask whether we may expect to get a supply of these rifles soon and also whether the cavalry may expect to get their carbines at the same time? I do not want to press the question, as we shall have other opportunities of doing so, but if we are informed how soon these rifles will be forthcoming and how much each rifle is to cost, those who are interested in this question will know better what course to take when we come to vote upon this particular part of the Estimates.

*MR. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich): I do not agree with the remarks of the hon. Gentleman opposite who a short time ago said that an increased Vote for the army is always popular in this House, or even in this country. In my opinion the only reason we vote increased supplies is because they are necessary, and no Government would be worthy of the name if it proposed a Vote for the increase of the Army on any other ground. I was glad to hear the remarks of the noble Lord opposite with regard to the Militia. As an old Militiaman, I trust that the points urged by the noble Lord on the Secretary for War will not be lost sight of. I do not think the noble Lord gave sufficient credit for the

improvement in Militia officers, for I think there has been a great and marked improvement in the condition of the men and the efficiency of their officers during the past 20 years. With regard to the prevalence of absenteeism in a number of regiments at the present time, I am of opinion that stricter inquiry should be made into the characters of recruits when they come up for enlistment. I am specially grateful to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War for his proposals to improve the barrack accommodation in some parts of the country. The principal military centre in the county which I have the honour to represent, is Colchester, where there are excellent cavalry and artillery barracks, and very good quarters for the married men; but where the infantry huts, which have to accommodate a very large number of men, are of a very inferior description. They were built, I believe, before or during the progress of the Crimean war, for the reception of the Belgian Legion, and were only intended to last a short time, being made of wood; but from that day to this they have never been properly reconstructed, though, no doubt, the expense of merely repairing them has been enormous. I sincerely hope that Colchester will not be forgotten when the time comes for the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State to carry out his plans.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I am glad to see the Financial Secretary to the Treasury present, for he was one of the most regular attendants at the Committee on the Army Estimates, presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Paddington. The Secretary of State for War stated on the question of guns, that there were, besides the Government Departments, three large factories, which supplied those guns, and four large firms which supplied the steel of which those guns were made. Could the names of those firms be supplied to us, and could the Secretary of State for War announce to us on what principle those factories have been selected? I think it will be in the recollection of the Financial Secretary that in the debate which we had last year I said that all this raw material should be put up to open contract as far as possible. I do not complain of guns—or parts of guns—being put out to private business firms; but I think it would be well if the Secretary of State would throw these contracts open to public competition, so that any one who likes may come forward. It is extremely necessary that manufacturers should be encouraged when a new system of manufacture is about to be entered upon; but very great care should be taken in deciding what firms should be encouraged, and the amount of orders to be given out ought to be definitely stated. If not, considerable trouble is likely to arise. I remember that about seven or eight years ago the then Secretary of State for War entered into arrangements with certain manufacturers for the supply of steel for Woolwich Arsenal, and he gave encouragement to certain men. I pointed out what a dangerous course he was entering on, and the results justified my warning, for there subsequently appeared to be an uncertainty as to who had actually been encouraged to put up new machinery, and subsequently the Secretary for War pleaded in this House that he was, in consequence of the claims of these firms, obliged to give them contracts. I think the present Secretary for War should, therefore, be very careful whom he encourages to put up machinery for the production of these guns, and he should make it clear to them what amount of orders firms putting up machinery are likely to have, so that they may re-imburse themselves, and future Secretaries of War need not be hampered by their claims. I come next to the question of the inspection of warlike stores. The result, the Committee will remember, of the deliberations of Lord Morley's Committee was to institute a fresh system of inspection. Now the public mind has been much moved of late by the reports as to bad swords and bad bayonets. But I never paid much attention to these reports, because I hold that swords and bayonets are not likely to be such important factors in the battle fields of the future as they have been in those of the past. I hold that the proper construction of the rifle is a thousand times more important. I think that our present system of inspection is dangerous. With regard to the inspection of warlike stores, the Secretary of State informed me some time ago that we must not hope to get cheaper stores, on account of the system of inspection which has been

adopted; and I saw in a paper the other day that considerable confusion has been caused by the rejection of stores by the inspectors. It is quite possible that the want of knowledge on the part of the inspectors, combined with too much zeal, may lead to difficulties; and, of course, if inspectors are over strict and condemn too many articles, the prices of stores will run up. Bad articles should not be passed, but there is a danger to be guarded against in the other direction, and I think the authorities should see to it that these inspections are not carried out with too much zeal. In regard to the field guns I differ from the view of the Director General of Artillery as to the necessity of getting new batteries complete, with guns, carriages, and waggons all new, when a new gun is adopted. I think that is doubtful economy; and I hold it would be sufficient to get the new guns and gun carriages as quickly as possible, and deal with the question of the waggons afterwards. With regard to the smaller, but not less important, question of the rifles, I think the Secretary of State for War might have given a more definite statement. For instance, I should like to know a little more about the allotment of orders between the factories in London and Birmingham. It is also a matter of enormous importance to know when the new magazine rifles will be turned out. Unless they are ready quickly there is something inconsequential in the conduct of the Government. The increase in the Army and Navy Estimates can only have one meaning, if the matter be judged favourably to the Government, and these questions I do not regard from a Party point of view. It does not mean that the Government is thinking of war, but that Great Britain's preparations cannot be allowed to fall too far behind those of other Powers. An excellent pattern has been adopted for the new rifle—probably the best in Europe, because it is the last. But, as far as I know, not a single rifle, except a few for experiment, has yet been issued to the Army. France has close upon half a million at the present time, and the other great Powers are far in advance of England in this matter. What is the use, then, of increasing the Estimates, if the production of the new rifles in England is so slow? I hope the Secretary for War will give us some information as to the number of rifles likely to be turned out in the course of the next twelve months, for I really look upon this as a question of State policy. It is idle to urge it would be indiscreet to give such information to the world, because the power of production of the factories is in all probability, known to every foreign Government. Again, the Secretary of State for War has touched very doubtfully on the question of smokeless powders, and has said that, while undoubtedly they are an improvement in many respects, the Government intend for the present to adhere to the ordinary black powder. These chemical powders, which are smokeless, undoubtedly produce better shooting, and that is a very important point. Scientific witnesses have urged that time is required to test their adaptability to various climates. No doubt time would be the best test to apply; but, in the meanwhile an emergency might arise and pass before the question is settled. Surely chemical tests could be applied which would approximately indicate the real value of the powders under all circumstances. You must anticipate the action of time, and I believe chemists could tell you more as to the reliability of these powders in different climates. I, therefore, trust that the Secretary for War will reconsider his verdict on this matter. I now come to the question of the *personnel* of the Army and that of the Army Corps. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton congratulates the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War on having said very little about the Army Corps. Well, I never considered this was a pressing question, but it is mixed up with the question of efficiency. In my opinion, it is very doubtful if the Army Corps system is suitable for the British Army. It is to the interest of the military party to insist on two Army Corps, because, having obtained them, they will at once point out how useless they will be without a third. I do not think that an Army Corps organization is necessary or desirable for a small Army, like that of Great Britain, of under 100,000 men. I admit you must have Army Corps when you get beyond a certain number of men; but I am

afraid that our own Secretary of State for War has been too much at the mercy of his professional advisers in dealing with this matter; for, as I have already pointed out, they prefer the system for reasons of their own. I wish the Secretary of State for War had noticed a little more the question of the rations served out to the soldiers. We had the subject before the Committee of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) last year, and it seemed to be generally agreed that the rations were insufficient, and it was stated, at the same time, that the soldier would not bear any reduction from his pay in order to give him better rations. There has been this year a falling off in recruiting, which is to be very much regretted, although we cannot, of course, regret the cause of it, which is, of course, the great improvement which has taken place in the trade of the country. It seems to me that the difficulty as to recruiting can only be got over by improving the condition of the men, and one of the most essential improvements to be effected is in the matter of rations. No doubt at present there is a large amount of criminality amongst the soldiers, and the character of the troops in many cases requires a large number of men to be told off for guard duty, being in that way kept away from instruction in drill. I do not believe in the allegation once made by an officer that one-half of Her Majesty's Army is occupied in keeping the other half in the guard-room, but no doubt there is an improvement to be effected in the character of the men, and I hold that if you make the condition of the men better, and improve the rations and pay, you will raise the character of your soldiers, and it will become then a punishment instead of a reward for misconduct to turn a man out of the army. A very vexed question was introduced by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan) in regard to the Indian Army, and I think his general argument was, in the main, extremely sound. I perfectly agree that the Army at home should not be regarded merely as a gigantic depôt for the Indian Army. The more you divide Her Majesty's forces into an Indian Army and Colonial Army on the one hand, and a home Army on the other, the more efficient will your Army become. You would get more efficient Indian and Colonial troops by keeping the men longer than you do at present in India and the Colonies — though, of course, the evil is to be avoided of cutting the men off from England altogether, and teaching them to forget their connection with the home army. But I do think the service would be vastly improved if a soldier could say "I am enlisting for two or three years' service at home, in a particular county; I can almost choose the town I shall be in; and at the expiration of two or three years I can leave and join the Indian Army, if I like." That would be a much better system than the present, and it would, I am sure, prove attractive to the men if they could enlist three years in the infantry, and a little more in the cavalry and artillery, knowing that they would not be compelled to go to India or the Colonies, except in a case of emergency. Another matter on which I feel strongly, is this: I think the Secretary of State should do everything in his power to try and increase the Reserves, this being a point on which continental armies are so much superior to our own. Our present system springs in a great measure from the necessity of sending men to the Colonies and to India, and in order to do that you have to enlist your men for seven years. There is an exception to that rule, and that is in the case of the Guardsmen, who are only enlisted for three years. No doubt their Reserves are in a much more satisfactory state than the Reserves of the line regiments. If you enlist men for three years and allow them to go to the Colonies or to India, if they like, afterwards, you might run up your Reserves very much. You might run them up from 25 per cent of your Army to 100 per cent, a number which I believe it perfectly possible to obtain. This I hold to be one of the most important questions in connection with the *personnel* of the Army. It takes very little time to educate a man to fight, and, therefore, I am in favour of short service enlistment. It is true it takes a man a long time to learn to ride a horse, but to teach him to fire a gun and get from column to open order and back again is a thing which can be done in a few weeks. Of course I do not allude to making a man

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a smart soldier, teaching him to trim and dress and bear himself well in barracks, and so on; but these things, although they are the pride of officers, are not required in actual warfare. What a soldier actually wants to know to be an efficient fighting man is very little. I say, cut down the time for which you enlist the men. If you do not adopt the German system, at any rate cut the time down to two or three years, in the manner of the French system.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.): I regard this subject as one of vital importance. Two years back an appeal was made to the Secretary of State for War of the present Government to abstain from crippling the Royal Horse Artillery. This question was in every soldier's heart and on every soldier's lip. We wanted to know whether the highest military authority we have—namely, the Commander-in-Chief—approved of the reduction which had taken place in this force; but the etiquette of the Army, its sense of discipline, and the respect felt for the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State prevented any of us from asking a question on the point. However, we now have the answer of his Royal Highness given before the Committee on Military Estimates last year, and for fear of making a mistake I will read his statement word for word. His Royal Highness said:

"As to the Horse Artillery, I think it very desirable that they should be restored to their full strength."

Now, after the reductions carried out last year nine batteries only of the Royal Horse Artillery remained on the strength of the Home establishment, and they were all attenuated batteries—*cadres*. We had to bow to the action of the authorities; but we relied to a great extent upon the words of the Secretary of State two years back this week. On the 14th of March, 1887, the Secretary of State for War, speaking in this House, said:

"Our object is to have no longer a large proportion of attenuated batteries. We hope to have a few organized in the most effective manner, ready to be produced whenever they are wanted."

How grand and hopeful was this promise, and yet to-day, after the lapse of upwards of a year, not one man—not one horse—has been given to any one of these nine batteries to raise them from their state of attenuation and prostration. With regard to reserves, the Commander-in-Chief in his evidence said:

"The artillery is a very delicate arm, and I certainly should not have confidence in a horse artilleryman after he has been away a year."

And, further, His Royal Highness said:

"I think that the cavalry and artillery should be kept at the fullest strength at which they can be maintained."

While other countries are increasing their mobile artillery, we are decreasing this arm. I will not trouble the House by repeating the evidence brought forward two years ago as to the absolute necessity of a mobile artillery, but resistless evidence has been adduced from incidents in history and from the opinions of the most distinguished and experienced soldiers in European and Indian warfare proving the absolute necessity for an adequate force of horse artillery—evidence that shows that this arm, by its extreme mobility, can turn the tide of battle, and that an army in an open country without horse artillery and cavalry is impotent; that its troops will have no rest by night or day, and that its leaders, however intrepid, will command without confidence or prospect of success. I do earnestly hope that the request of His Royal Highness will be attended to. As an old soldier, I must say I was deeply grieved to hear from the opposite benches the remarks which fell from the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir G. Trevelyan), although I have no doubt he considered them just and right. The right hon. Gentleman ignored the shabby way in which the country has behaved to its officers. There are hundreds of men who staked their fortune in the army—who put all they had in the hands of the Government, the Government keeping the money. I hope the present Secretary of State will recognise fully that the country is indebted to its officers—to many of them to the extent of £4,000. Many young officers have complained that the Government have got the £900 they received from them and yet other officers who had paid nothing were running up side by

side with them for promotion. With regard to the question of the quality of the swords, I may say that I have carried a sword nearly all my life, and have even suffered by it, and I am able to say that the best swords can be procured at Solingen. Even at Dettingen our soldiers carried swords manufactured in this place. For a long time the swords in use in the British Army have been made abroad. One of the finest swordsmen I ever knew told me on one occasion that the hilt of the broadsword being found inconvenient, as it cut the accoutrements of the men, an order was issued for changing the pattern of the hilt, but as this could not be effected without spending £100 upon plant, Messrs Wilkinson were unable to effect the change, which, therefore, had to be carried out in Germany.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War no doubt was exceedingly clear, as his speeches always are, so far as it went. I could not help, however, regretting that it did not go farther. I regret some things that he did not say. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman did not forestall what I had intended to say had I been able to bring on my Motion on going into Committee. However, the right hon. Baronet the Member or the Bridgetown Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) forestalled a great deal of what I had intended to say, as also did the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton). I desire to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester, though I am not sure that I shall do it on the same grounds that he proposed it. I am not one of those who feel quite easy about our present position, and I am one of those who believe that we are by no means safe from invasion. I am very much a man of peace; and I hope that should there in the future be great wars in Europe we shall not be involved in them. On the other hand, however, I cannot disguise from myself that we are a proud and rather a bumptious, and also an aggressive people, to some extent, and, therefore, no one can say what might happen. In the event of a war happening on the Continent we as neutrals might find our position prejudiced, and as a matter of fact we never know when we might be drawn into hostilities. Well, I conceive that no Fleet we can have can give us perfect protection, and I therefore desire to see this country strong on shore, but for defensive, and not for offensive, purposes. I would, therefore, submit to the House these propositions—first, that we should provide for defence, and not offence. For my own part, I rather wish to keep down the Regular Forces, and that whatever Army we have it should not be one which would enable us to vie with any Continental nation as a great military Power. I do not want the two Army Corps that are spoken of, for I think they will probably lead us on to mischief. We are much better without them. I am of opinion that we should provide for defence at home, which is a primary object, rather than provide for the defence of our Colonies, which is a secondary consideration. As regards our foreign possessions, my belief is that our self-governing Colonies are now pretty well able to defend themselves. India can defend herself, with certain reciprocal assistance between herself and this country; and, as I say, with regard to the Colonies, though I do not deprecate our possession of them, I do not, I must say, regard our connection with them as vital to our strength. The principal object of the Motion I put on the Paper is to urge that we should have a complete plan for the defence of these islands. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division said that we want a scheme which shall combine the Army, Militia, Volunteers, and all our Forces; but I want to combine not only the land, but the naval and coast defences. The next

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proposition I wish to submit is that, under the present conditions of service, no regular Army which we can have is sufficient for the defence of these islands. The Secretary of State hopes to be able to put in these Islands a regular Force of 80,000 men. I apprehend that includes Ireland; if it does, the force for the defence of Great Britain is greatly diminished. Then the Secretary of State gave his reasons why the Army Reserve is not a force easily available. He told us how unwilling employers are to let their men go; indeed, I think the right hon. Gentleman proved the case that the Army Reserve, as it stands, is not a force on which we can rely. I do not think we shall ever be secure in these Islands until we have a thoroughly reliable citizen force. There is another proposition I have to submit, and it is that the system of armed citizens to defend our homes is the greatest possible security for peace. The Regular Services are always crying out for war and for aggressive policy. ("No, no!") Well, perhaps I am wrong. I admit that there are many sensible men in the Army and Navy, many men who, having seen service, would be the last to precipitate war. But there is among younger men in both services a spirit encouraged by popular feeling in favour of war. But in the case of a citizen army, people do not like to see their husbands, sons, and lovers sent out to risk their lives. We have a Volunteer Army of which we may be proud, and a Militia which in many respects is efficient; but there is no sufficient organization and combination of these forces with the Regular Army so as to be able to meet a sudden invasion. According to the statement and speech of the Secretary of State, there is a falling off in the Militia and Volunteers, and I cannot see that the right hon. Gentleman has suggested anything sufficient. The Volunteers ought to be treated more liberally. I hear on all sides that the officers of Volunteers are not able to keep up the force, though they spent large sums on it out of their own means. It is very unreasonable to expect them to do so. With regard to our coast defences, the Secretary of State has not put the subject in a sufficiently prominent shape before the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman told the Committee that arrangements have been made for garrisoning the ports; but what provision has been made for the general coast defence of the kingdom I do not know. Kirkcaldy, the constituency which I represent, is one of the most exposed in the country, and I should like to know what preparations has been made for its defence. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will tell us what he means when he says he proposes to assist those localities which assist themselves. The town of Kirkcaldy has assisted itself as largely as it could be expected to do. The people have not only a good show of Rifle Volunteers, but also of Artillery Volunteers. In addition, the county of Fife has a very large and efficient force of Artillery Volunteers. Under these circumstances the Secretary of State may be prepared to give us sufficient guns to destroy any cruisers which may come to blow us to pieces. At present there are in Kirkcaldy only a few guns, not more formidable than pop-guns, while the garrison only consists of three men. Now, with regard to the question of Colonial contribution, the Secretary of State proposes, according to the statement he has circulated, that there should be an additional contribution of £30,000. I cannot help thinking that the Colonies have been treated with such indulgence that they will try to evade the payment of every farthing you propose to put upon them. Malta may be a very important station, but I am not quite sure that we should not be better without it; at any rate, its possession is not at all so important as our home defence. The contribution from the Colonies is miserably inadequate. I find that in the Colonies, exclusive of Egypt, we maintain 30,640 men, at a cost of £1,986,352. In addition, there is the cost of arms, ammunition, barracks, sea transport, and the non-effective Services. In reality, the real cost of the 30,000 men is nearly £4,000,000 a year, What is the contribution of the Colonies towards this sum? At present it is £114,000; if you get the proposed addition it will only be £144,000. I say that this is miserably inadequate. I protest against treating the Colonies with the excessive indulgence accorded to them. I do not see why rich Colonies should benefit by the

protection of this country, and practically pay nothing for it. Newfoundland, Bermuda, Halifax, the West India Islands, contribute nothing, neither does Cape Colony. Natal pays £4,000; Mauritius formerly paid £18,000, but now only pays £15,000; Ceylon used to pay £43,000; it now pays £34,000. The Straits Settlements pay £35,000, instead of £44,000 as formerly. I think these facts justify me in saying that the mother country is not being treated fairly in this matter. Now there is one other very important question which has not been touched upon in this debate, and that is, the utilization of the non-effective force. I want to see a large portion of the non-effective force available for the citizen army which I wish to see organized. Enormous expense is incurred by the provision of retiring allowances for officers who are comparatively young men. I do not by any means grudge the retiring allowances, if, at the same time, the officers are utilized in connection with the citizen army. It is notorious that we have not a sufficient supply of officers for the Militia and the Volunteers, and, therefore, I believe that by the introduction of a judicious system those officers who will willingly engage in serving their country in this way may be utilized. I hope something will be done to make an arrangement of this kind. Just one word with regard to a question which has already been mentioned in the debate—namely, the great necessity which exists for dividing the Army into a real short service Army and a real long service Army. I do not agree with the suggestion that a separate Army for India is desirable; there are great dangers in having a European Army for India alone; but I certainly desire two classes of soldiers—one which does not wish to go abroad, but which is anxious to perform military along with civilian duties, and another class which will make soldiering a profession. The noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) made a serious beginning in that direction, and I am somewhat disappointed that nothing is said on the subject in the present statement of the Secretary of State for War. I am sure that is the way in which to make the Army fitted to meet the exigencies of the country. I heartily agree with what has been said as to the necessity of providing better barracks. When I compare the barracks provided in this rich country with those provided in a poor country like Switzerland, I am ashamed of England in this respect. As to the Horse Artillery, I entirely disagree with the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Hampshire (Sir F. Fitz Wygram). I have always thought the Horse Artillery a most expensive force, and I am very glad it has been reduced. I have nothing more to say except that I hope we shall have from the Government some statement as to what they propose to do with regard to the defence of these islands. Holding the views I do I must vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton).

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey): The hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkaldy took a very comprehensive view of the requirements of the country, but at the same time he protested vigorously against any increase of the Colonial forces. I do not gather whether he meant that the Colonies should look after themselves.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: To a reasonable extent.

MR. BRODRICK: The hon. Gentleman considers that the Colonies are not vital to us, and that their contributions are miserably inadequate. In short, he led us to understand that in his opinion it would be better if we looked after our own affairs and left the Colonies to look after theirs. I think the hon. Gentleman was a party to the expenditure on the coaling stations in which the House of Commons entered unanimously two or three years ago. I do not think any policy could be more ridiculous than that of providing armaments and fortifications and not providing men to serve them. The hon. Gentleman regretted that there was a reduction in the Militia and Volunteers, but surely he did not notice that the Volunteers, having come under a different standard of efficiency, are stronger in every particular than hitherto.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: There is a large decrease in the number of efficients.

MR. BRODRICK: The decrease is something like 3,000 in 225,000, and the men are forced to make a certain number of points in shooting. I think it is necessary that hon. Members who are to occupy the time of the Committee at length on military subjects should recognise the conditions under which military efficiency is to be gauged. When hon. Members talk of a great decrease of Volunteers, they ought to recognise that if we fix a very much higher standard of efficiency, and the Volunteers attain it o the extent of something like 97 per cent, there is really an increase of strength and not a decrease. It is only due to the Volunteers to make this remark, because the way in which they have responded to the call of my hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War is one which reflects the greatest credit on the Force. The hon. Gentleman referring to the statement that there will be 80,000 men available for garrison duty, asked how we shall provide for the garrisoning of Ireland. The hon. Member will be surprised to hear that the garrisoning of Ireland has been provided for without counting on the 80,000. If the hon. Member, instead of limiting his attention to the defence of Kirkcaldy, were to carry it a little further south and west, and notice the city of Edinburgh meeting the Secretary of State for War half way by providing the land for fortifications; if the right hon. Gentleman provided the guns, he would be doing very good service to the town of Kirkcaldy as well as to the Firth of Forth. Nothing is more important than that the different localities should do something for themselves. The hon. Member does not see things in the light we do. Does he want all ports to be made military ports, like Portsmouth?

SIR G. CAMPBELL: No. I only meant to say the offer of the Government was not liberal enough; they have not met the ports half way.

MR. BRODRICK: I do not know what the hon. Member would consider half way. The towns have gone no distance at all.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: More than the Government.

MR. BRODRICK: The Government offer to find works and guns if the town will find the land on which the guns are to be placed; and this, I think, is as far as the House of Commons can be expected to go. Then I pass to the extremely interesting speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan). He spoke at some length on the provision made for guns; and asked us what promises or pledges we had given to contractors to induce them to supply guns within a definite time, and he expressed his preference for definite orders, instead of indefinite pledges, such as were given, I believe, by Mr. Brand under the Government of 1884. He will be glad to hear that the contracts we propose to give will be definite contracts. It would be useless to expect the putting up of expensive machinery by indefinite promises of employment. They will be definite orders, as the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) was informed an hour or two ago, to fill the requirements of the Navy, as foreshadowed in the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty. We see our way to giving these contracts for adequate performance within the specified time; but the hon. and gallant Member will excuse me if I do not go absolutely into this question; it is better that this should not be pressed just now. The hon. and gallant Gentleman asked for open competition—open competition in the matter of big guns. Now, I am sure those who have had any experience at the War Office will know the risk we should undergo in anything of the kind, and will have in mind the enormous issues at stake; but we have gone as far as we can to ascertain the number of firms who could compete, their terms, and what their requirements are. And upon this information my right hon. Friend will found satisfactory contracts. Then there were several questions put

in reference to the Magazine rifle, and the time when its distribution will take place. Well, we have every hope that the distribution of the rifles will begin before the close of the present financial year. Progress with the rifle has been delayed no doubt, until very recently, through difficulties arising before the Small Arms Committee, but now every hitch is removed; the departments at Enfield and at Birmingham are at work, and, as I said, the distribution will commence before the close of the financial year.

COLONEL NOLAN: How many will be distributed?

MR. BRODRICK: Seventy thousand or eighty thousand during the financial year will be manufactured for us and for the Indian Army. Their order will be executed parallel with ours.

COLONEL NOLAN: How many for India?

MR. BRODRICK: About 30,000. There is one point I must not forget; it was raised by the hon. Member for North Birmingham (Mr. Kenrick). He expressed his belief that the Government were rather more inclined to favour Germany than England in the matter of sword manufacture.

MR. KENRICK: I simply said that that was the impression abroad. I did not say that it was my own.

MR. BRODRICK: Speaking from his position and from his trade knowledge, I feel that, coming from him, it is a point that I cannot pass over. There is no desire whatever of that kind, and if the hon. Member wants anything else to disabuse him of that idea, he has only to turn to the Estimates which are now before the House, and he will see that there is provision made for a great increase of workmen and expenditure on works proposed to be undertaken at Enfield and Birmingham during the next financial year. At Enfield, for instance, it is proposed to make an increase from 220,000 to 250,000 on that account; and at Birmingham, where the hon. Member has special interest, from 35,000 this year to 65,000 in the coming year. This is in addition to the contract given to Mr. Mould, of Birmingham. He has received an order to the full extent of his own tender for 15,000 swords and bayonets, to be delivered, I think, all within the next financial year, or very soon afterwards. There is every desire to encourage the manufacture, not only at Government establishments like Enfield and Sparkbrook, of rifles, swords, and bayonets, but also among private firms, and I may say that if we can get any one single thing we need from the United Kingdom, we would infinitely prefer to get it there than from abroad. So far as this sword industry can be developed in Great Britain we shall lose no opportunity of doing our utmost to promote it. There is one other question which has been touched upon by the noble Lord the Member for Hampshire (Viscount Wolmer). He spoke with great knowledge of the Militia, and he made several very valuable suggestions, pointing out how in his view the loss in the Militia could be lessened, and suggested, among other things, the localization of companies. He showed how recruits came from country and town districts, and of the latter the noble Lord did not seem to entertain a very high opinion. I confess there is great force in the arguments he used, and I am quite sure the Department will be ready to consider his suggestions. He also spoke of improving the system of recruiting, and found fault with the present permanent staff, saying that the relative success in obtaining efficiency was not sufficiently regarded. It is a suggestion that ought to be considered, and if it has not been considered it must be the fault of the commanding officers; they have only themselves to blame. But, of course, it was impossible for the noble Lord to bring forward definite instances. One thing I can say, that the sole reason why the present system was adopted and maintained—that of taking men actually in regiments of the Line and sending them to serve as adjutants in the Militia and Reserve Forces—was to preserve a class midway between the Army and the Reserve; that a man should have a stimulus, and not conclude—because his service in the Army was expired—that no more would be heard of him, but that he might serve in the Reserve Force and get promotion. I have no doubt that the remarks made by the noble Lord will bear fruit after the attention which he has directed to the subject. Certainly, the state of the Militia is not satisfactory

in regard to numbers; but, of course, there is the difficulty always to encounter that recruiting falls off when employment becomes more brisk. My right hon. Friend will have no objection to consider what form an inquiry, such as that suggested, should take. Several other points have been raised, upon which, I think, I need not now dwell. In regard to the Amendment by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton), I think it has been made so clear by my right hon. Friend that the sole object of the increase made this year is to provide efficient forces for the protection of those works the House of Commons has already sanctioned, that I need not further detain the Committee in justification of that.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.): I listened with interest and pleasure to the statement of the Secretary of State for War, and I must join with others in expressing my admiration of the activity, energy, ingenuity, and ability with which he and the distinguished officers who assist him have, so far, under the conditions that were imposed upon them, developed the military resources of the country. But the main feature of the Estimates which arrests most attention and excites no slight degree of surprise and disappointment is the proposal to increase the total expenditure upon the Army by no less than £600,000. At a time when the Government are recommending a large development and expansion of our naval strength, involving a heavy burden on the taxpayer, we might naturally expect that in the other branch of warlike expenditure there would have been prominently displayed a more than usually vigorous effort to effect savings which would, in some degree, afford compensatory relief. That surely would be the course taken by a prudent administrator under ordinary circumstances, and we anxiously scrutinized the Estimates to find the trace of such an effort. I find no such traces, however, but on the contrary, the most prominent feature is this increase of £600,000. But there is more than this, because in the course of his speech, and in a quiet and casual way, the right hon. Gentleman informed the House that this was not the whole Military Budget, and that there were other financial proposals of an alarming kind which the Government would have to submit by-and-bye to the House. I agree that the condition of much of our barrack accommodation is deplorable; that it is desirable that the location of our troops should be reconsidered; and that they should be concentrated so as to conduce to greater economy and efficiency; but I object to what was foreshadowed—namely, that the work will be effected by means of a loan, and I maintain that the House should be informed now what approximately will have to be paid for these needed reforms, the cost of which ought to be provided for out of the annual Estimates and not by means of a loan. It would have been better if the right hon. Gentleman had followed the example of his colleague the First Lord, and disclosed the whole demand, whether it was to be met by loan or by the taxation of the year. There is, I have said, little trace of saving in these Estimates. I am well aware, from personal experience, of the enormous difficulty of curbing the expenditure on these laudable and patriotic services, and as long as the system and organization of the Army remains as at present this difficulty will continue. I know how one object after another is urged upon the Minister, and supported with overwhelming arguments by his professional advisers, and it is almost impossible to say which should be allowed and which refused. But a limit to expenditure must be found somewhere, and in such a year as this that limit ought to be applied with more rigour than usual. Before making any general observations upon military policy, I will ask the Committee to consider the decreases and increases shown in the Estimates. In the statement on page 3 of the Estimates a distinction is drawn between those which are automatic and those which are due to policy and administration. The decreases due to policy are set down at £92,300; but I notice one of the items is £14,200 for Non-Effective Services in India; but surely that is automatic and in no way due to policy? The rest of the reductions are, I am bound to say, of a satisfactory character. The reduction in the Army Pay Department is a matter upon which I may specially congratulate my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary. The establishment of a system of station paymasters is an object that has been desired for twenty

years. I hope that the change may be carried a little further, and that these officers may be interchangeable with others in the Accountant General's Department, so that they may have experience in turn in discharging pay duties at out stations, and also in administration at headquarters. The increases which are due to changes of policy and administration amount to £612,000, of which the increase of the Army accounts for £100,000, and stores for £400,000. I do not object to the particular addition to the Army because it provides Native Corps and Lascars for the garrisoning of coaling stations. But the £400,000 increase under the head of stores includes £342,000 for guns, carriages, ammunition, and small arms, and it will be observed by looking at Vote 12 that this increase occurs upon an expenditure, for these sub-heads, of £1,000,000, which is a large provision to begin with. Without saying which particular item might be curtailed, there was surely here a wide field for that squeezing and pressure by which alone savings can be effected. I am too cautious and wily to point to particular services that might have been reduced, because the irrefutable arguments which have already been used by the Military Authorities for the purpose of convincing the right hon. Gentleman will immediately be advanced for my discomfiture. But I point to these large sums as, at least, offering a favourable field to a Minister anxious to make economies with a view to meet increases in other directions. Speaking of what formerly took place when the War Office Estimates included a provision for Navy guns, the right hon. Gentleman said it was a scandal when the Admiralty demand was cut down by the War Office, and this had been put an end to. It may have been a bad system, and I always advocated a change; but the right hon. Gentleman was inaccurate in speaking of the Admiralty claim as being cut down "by the War Office;" if it was reduced it was with the assent of the First Lord, and it was done by him and the War Minister conjointly. Besides, so long as the War Office had to bear the charge, perhaps the Admiralty was induced to make demands in excess of actual requirements; and "scandal" is certainly a strong term to apply And now a word or two on another knotty point—the supply of swords. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of an order given to Solingen by one of his predecessors, and I believe that predecessor was the First Lord of the Treasury. [Mr. E. STANHOPE: I said "several."] Well, I was speaking of the latest, and if I recollect rightly what occurred was, that Mr. Mole undertook to make a certain number of swords, and the order for the remainder that were required was given to Solingen. Mr. Mould, however, was unable to supply all he had contracted for, but he offered to make the hilts if the Department would accept Solingen blades; whereupon the Department said, if they were to have Solingen blades after all, they might as well have cheaper swords direct from Germany at once. This incident explains what has puzzled a good many people in the country—that, owing to a great demand being exceptional and rare in England, the sword-making trade had almost vanished, and therefore we were obliged like the rest of the world to go to Solingen for swords. I am, however, glad to learn that this industry is now reviving. Well, Sir, there has been another source of saving pointed to—namely, the Generals' List, with which the right hon. Gentleman says he intends to deal. This is matter for congratulation; but I am even more suspicious about the Lieutenants' List, because when once a man appears on that list he is practically guaranteed a career, vested rights cannot be touched, and it is an expensive matter to keep the flow of promotion going for all these. If you want to reduce the charges for officers of the Army, what you have to do is to limit the entry of junior officers. I am afraid that of late, though not in the last year or two, there has been a tendency to unduly increase the subalterns' list. I was glad to gather from the observations of the right hon. Gentleman that in future promotion to the Generals' List will only be given those who hold or have held the command of a General. This is indeed the sound principle of promotion from one end of the Service to the other, that there should be no promotion to rank alone but that rank should accompany selection for duty. I look back with satisfaction to the fact that during the short

time I was at the War Office, I for the first time introduced that principle in regard to promotion to the rank of Colonel, and this did something to check the number of those officers, who were multiplying and replenishing the earth at an inordinate rate. I was glad to find in the War Office at that time a disposition to act on the principle that officers should only be promoted to the rank of Colonel who held appointments as Colonels, and I hope it will now also be acted on in regard to Generals. But, Sir, the case for adverse criticism of these Estimates seems to be stronger than I have as yet put it. What is the position assumed by the Government as represented by the statement the other night of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty. They make an assertion to the House, and to the world, that the provision at present made for the defence of these shores and of our commerce and of the Empire at large is inadequate, and they found on that assertion their new shipbuilding policy. Now this is not the time to express any opinion with regard to that statement, but I would point out that the defence of the Empire is partly naval and partly military, and it would appear to an unsophisticated mind that, in this composite undertaking, in proportion as the naval element is strengthened, it might be found practicable to modify and reduce the military element. But there is more than this. Let me recall to the recollection of the House what occurred at this time last year. The hon. and gallant Member for Sussex (Sir W. Barttelot) brought forward a Motion for the appointment of a Commission to inquire into and report upon the requirements for the protection of the Empire. This Motion was largely supported, especially by hon. and gallant Members opposite, but Her Majesty's Government in my judgment very rightly opposed it, as any such Commission of Inquiry would have been in derogation of the sound Constitutional principle which places the direct responsibility in this matter upon the Ministers of the Crown — a principle which is the corner-stone of our Parliamentary system of Government. The Government instead granted the hon. and gallant Gentleman a Committee of Inquiry into the higher organization of the Admiralty and War Office, and I have much sympathy for my hon. and gallant Friends, for, although they cheerfully and innocently accepted this substitute, it gave them nothing of what they desired. Besides this, however, Her Majesty's Government appointed a Committee of Cabinet Ministers to inquire into the whole military and naval position of the Empire, and this step I entirely approved of—it was the proper Constitutional course for them to pursue. This Cabinet Committee has had frequent meetings, and has had the advice and assistance of the principal professional authorities of the country. I assume that it has not occupied itself with the smaller details of administration, with questions of the best type of ships and the best form of guns. I assume that it has inquired into great questions of naval and military policy with a view to our having some definite principle in the matter, for that is what is demanded not only in the country, but, above all, by the officers who are interested in the two Services. The time is favourable for determining this great question,—for what purpose our Army is maintained, and what strength and organization is required for that purpose. Military policy obviously depends upon foreign policy, and at the present time there is apparently and ostentatiously a practical concord upon the subject of foreign policy. Both political Parties profess one principle of foreign policy, which is that, while willing to give friendly advice, we shall entirely abstain from any interference in Continental politics. What is the inference, as affecting our military policy, to be drawn from that fact? It is that we must abandon definitely all idea of placing on the Continent the six or ten, or perhaps 15 or 20 Army Corps which Continental interference would imply, and that we should restrict our Army to the protection of India and our Colonies and to our own domestic defence. There are many men of great authority who maintain that, with a sufficiently strong Navy, invasion of this country would become impossible. What they say is that while our Fleet holds the seas no one would dare to invade us, and that, if by any misfortune our Fleet lost the command of the seas, no one would need to invade us. That

is an extreme view, which I, for one, am not prepared to adopt. But it is easy to see how intimately the great military question I refer to is connected with the question of our naval strength. I will only refer for a moment to Ireland; but everybody must know that if by some policy we succeed in securing to the Government of that country the respect and support of the people of Ireland, we shall at once disengage a large number of the troops employed in Ireland. However, I will pass by that subject, because it brings in other questions of Party policy. But on the mere ground of the distribution of naval and military duties in the work of our national defence, I am interested to know whether the question of the numbers and the preparedness of the Land Forces as a whole was considered by the Committee of the Government when they resolved to increase the Navy, and whether the conclusion that they formed could be stated? My strong belief is that if a sufficient, a reasonable, and a gradual increase were given to the naval power of this country, and if it were openly and formally recognized that we were not to provide for taking any part in European warfare, a most material modification and reduction might be possible in the Army with great economical results, and with no loss to the efficiency of the Army for those limited purposes for which we should have to maintain it. The suggestion of my hon. Friend, that there should be a separate Indian and Colonial Army, is not a practical solution of the difficulty as far as I can judge. I am fully alive to the fact that to speak of such a modification as I have indicated is much easier than to effect it. Last year I explained to the House the difficulties in the way of a satisfactory alteration in the system of our Army. I confess, however, that my hopes were high that the present Government might accomplish the task. They have advantages which other Governments do not possess. They are strong in the very quarter of tradition and prejudice in which the impediments arise, and they are the masters and the controllers of those Conservative forces. Their action, therefore, would not arouse the jealousy and enmity which a Liberal Government would have to encounter in dealing with these great reforms. Yet apparently nothing has been done, and no principle has been laid down. We are to go on in the old hand-to-mouth way, merely asking for as much as a reluctant Parliament will give. There is, indeed, the imaginary standard of two Army Corps—an ideal adopted by the military authorities in sheer despair of having any definite principle laid down, and as furnishing at least some object up to which they might work. But what is an Army Corps? It is a body of troops composed of the different arms in certain prescribed proportions which foreign Armies find most suitable for great campaigns, in conterminous countries on the Continent of Europe—the very service on which we shall never employ our Army at all. Whereas if we wish to reinforce our garrison in India, or to send out some small expedition to Egypt or the Cape, the first thing we have to do is to disturb and break up our Army Corps. I cannot think that I am alone in thinking this an unsatisfactory picture of the organization of our Army; and thus my objection to these Estimates is twofold. In the first place, I complain that £600,000 should be added to the public burdens at a time when greatly increased expenditure is asked in regard to the Navy; and, in the second place, I object to these Estimates, because they disclose no comprehensive policy, no definition of the uses and duties of the Army, and no adaptation of the Army to those duties and uses such as a protracted and close investigation by the Government justified the Committee in expecting at their hands. My hon. Friend the Member for Leicester has moved a reduction in the number of men; I have said that these particular men are the native gunners to work the defences of the coaling stations already provided with the approval of Parliament. I cannot, therefore, vote against them. And apart from this a reduction would hardly be possible under the present organization; with another organization, as I have said, certain things could be done; but with the present organization I recognize the extreme difficulty of saving any money at all. So that, while sympathizing with the Amendment, I cannot support it. I am particularly anxious to know

from the Secretary of State what sum of money would be asked for barracks.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I think that after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman it is only right that I should offer one or two observations. Among the subjects which the right hon. Gentleman has introduced to the notice of the Committee is that of the two Army Corps which it has been the object of the War Office for the last two or three years to get into a state of thorough organization. I was under the impression that the beginning of the organization of those two Army Corps was in the administration of the right hon. Gentleman himself. If now the right hon. Gentleman thinks fit to despise and condemn them, then all I can say is that under the right hon. Gentleman the Regular and Auxiliary Forces had no organization at all. The right hon. Gentleman has based most of the remarks he has made on the assumption that the Navy programme will be accepted.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; I said that the Government who proposed the one ought not to have proposed the other.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: If the right hon. Gentleman is going to reject the Navy Estimates as well, he does not desire at all to aim at the proper defence of the country.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Let the right hon. Gentleman postpone the consideration of the Army Estimates till the opinion of the House was taken on the other proposals.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I never heard a more illogical proposition. The right hon. Gentleman is going to postpone the Army Estimates, and then he is going to vote against the Navy Estimates.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not say so.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Well, is he or is he not? One way or the other, he ought to provide for the defence of the country. The most important part of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was that in which he asked whether the present Army Estimates were the result of careful deliberation. I should like to tell the right hon. Gentleman and the country that the result of the deliberations of the Committee of the Cabinet was the Army Estimates now before Parliament. They deliberately considered what was necessary for the Army and the Navy. The one thing most wanted for the Army was the completion of the garrisons for the coaling stations. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman at all objected to that increase of the garrisons. The other point to which the right hon. Gentleman called attention was the proposed increase in regard to barracks, and the right hon. Gentleman wanted to know what sum would be asked for that purpose. I entirely decline to give him any information at all on a matter which is under the consideration of the Government until we have a complete scheme to put before Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman complained of that large expenditure, but surely he could not have read a line of the evidence before the Committee last year, which clearly showed that if any attempt was to be made to deal with the barracks of this country in a satisfactory manner it must be by a large permanent expenditure. Any ordinary private trader dealing with a matter of that kind would immediately propose a capital expenditure, because he would know that, on the ground of economy alone, he was justified in making that expenditure; and he would also know that it would be a saving to the expenditure of the country. I believe that we ought at once to try and put the barracks in a satisfactory condition. The right hon. Gentleman admits that our barracks are in a deplorable condition. I want to know where did he find that out, and I beg of him to answer this question. Did he find it out when he was in office in 1886? If he did, all I can say is that I never saw in any of the Estimates he laid before Parliament the smallest indication of any desire on his part to remedy that state of things. If the right hon. Gentleman has only now found it out, surely he might, instead of the carping criticism in which he has indulged, give the Government an opportunity of making their proposals to Parliament, and of trying to remedy a condition of things which, he said, was deplorable, without waiting for that interminable length of time which will be required if no increase be made upon the sum ordinarily voted for the barracks. The right hon. Gentleman has also complained because I described as a "scandal" the cutting

down by the War Office in 1886 of the Estimates proposed by the Admiralty; but I certainly think it is a scandal that after the Admiralty has put forward Estimates for the purpose of carrying out the services they think necessary, the War Office should cut out all the ammunition for the quick-firing guns. That is a thing which no Government ought to allow.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman speaks of the War Office cutting out certain items. In 1886, when the Estimates of the War Office and the Admiralty were considerably reduced, nothing in the Admiralty Estimate was cut down by the War Office. It was cut down as a matter of Cabinet policy, with the consent of the First Lord of the Admiralty and of the Secretary of State for War.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I entirely accept the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman. It was a matter of Cabinet policy that quick-firing guns should be provided for the Navy without ammunition. I am content to accept that explanation, and if the present Government has endeavoured in their time to provide a remedy for the state of things produced by such a result, I do not think they have laboured in vain. I earnestly entreat the Committee now to come a decision on the question raised by the hon. Member opposite. I know that a good many hon. Members wish to raise other questions of great importance upon these Estimates, but they will have an opportunity of doing so at a later stage.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I am not aware on what other Vote save Vote 5 it will be possible to raise the question I desire to raise this evening, or I should accede to the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman at once. The point I wish to bring to his notice is one which twice last year I understood the right hon. Gentleman to promise to consider, and one which is attended by so much hardship, and provocative of so much ill-feeling in the Channel Islands, that I think it absolutely necessary to bring it to the attention of the Committee—I refer to the Channel Islands Militia. At present the Militia there are burdensome in the highest degree to the poorer classes, the wealthier class being entirely untouched, while for what it costs to those parts of the country there is nothing whatever to show.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I feel sure the hon. Gentleman may raise this question on Vote 5.

MR. BRADLAUGH: If the right hon. Gentleman undertakes that I shall have an opportunity on Vote 5, I will give way.

*MR. E. STANHOPE: Unless the Chairman should object on Standing Orders—and I hope he will not—we will take the discussion on Vote 5.

THE CHAIRMAN: I see on page 6 of the Votes in Supply, Vote 5, a Vote for the Channel Islands Militia, so that it would be perfectly relevant to that Vote.

MR. BRADLAUGH: Then I will not press it further now.

*MR. CREMER: I beg to move, Sir, that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. I do not think the proposals of the Government have been adequately discussed, and I, therefore, hold that a good deal more time should be given to the very important questions which have been brought under notice. It is perfectly monstrous that we should not have the opportunity of discussing on this Vote the extraordinary proposal with regard to the defence of London.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Cremer.*)

*MR. E. STANHOPE: I must again appeal to the Committee upon this subject. It is absolutely necessary for us to comply with our statutory obligations, and the time at our disposal for doing so is exceedingly short. Seeing that the hon. Member will have an opportunity of discussing the subjects in which he is interested upon other Votes, and that the Motion for Adjournment, if carried, would simply have the

effect of stopping the business of the House at a critical period, I hope the hon. Gentleman will allow the Vote before the Committee to be taken.

*MR. CHILDERS: The Vote might be further discussed to-morrow at the Morning Sitting which the Government have obtained for Supply.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I would remind he right hon. Gentleman that the Supplementary Estimates are put down for the Morning Sitting to-morrow, and there are many subjects involved in them which Members are anxious to discuss. Hon. Members will be able to discuss matter connected with the Vote now before the Committee on other Votes.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): In supporting the Motion for Progress, I would point out that nearly the whole of the evening has been taken up by the discussion of matters connected with Army organization, while on the question of policy involved in the increased Estimates of the Army and Navy scarcely a word has been said. I confess that I am not concerned in the technicalities that have been raised, but I feel that on the foreign policy upon which the proposed enormous increase of expenditure is based we ought to have ample time for consideration. I come from a part of the country where the military feeling is not so strong as in the Metropolis. Of course hon. and gallant Gentlemen connected with the Army and Navy love to fan the military feeling; but the people of this country generally regard the matter from quite another point of view. I am amazed that when we want to go into the foreign policy of the Government the Chancellor of the Exchequer should tell us of the necessity for discussing certain paltry Supplementary Estimates to-morrow, while, as regards the two great Services of the country, the cost of which is to be enormously increased, we are to have nothing to do but vote the Ways and Means. I, for one, am determined to press for a further opportunity of discussing the great question involved in the statement submitted to the Committee this evening. We are always promised something at subsequent stages, but when we have voted the men right hon. Gentlemen opposite say, "You have given us the men; surely you will give us the means." I consider the House of Commons will be failing in its duty if it do not insist on discussing the policy on which the present proposal is based, and I therefore support the Motion for Progress.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: I hope the hon. Member who moved the adjournment will modify his intentions, seeing that the Secretary of State has given an undertaking that the passing of the Vote under discussion will not prevent us from discussing points which might be raised upon it on other Votes. If the hon. Member allows the Government to take the Vote, public business will be forwarded a step, and he will not forfeit a single right which he possesses of expressing his views to the Committee. The time at the disposal of hon. Members for the discussion of matters of importance is short, and if we drive any Government into a corner they become desperate—perfectly desperate—and make a grab at all the time of private Members. If private Members insist upon their rights at inopportune moments they lose all. On the ground of common sense as well as of policy, and in the interest of the taxpayer and of free discussion, I would urge the hon. Member not to persevere with his Motion.

*MR. CHILDERS: I have not the smallest wish to embarrass the Government. If I understand the right hon. Gentleman correctly, we can take Naval Supply on Thursday, the Vote on Account on Monday, and then there remain only five or six Votes in the Supplementary Estimates, four of which are unopposed. This Vote can thus be taken to-morrow. It is, therefore, only reasonable that the Committee should report Progress.

MR. GOSCHEN: I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman means to hold out the hope that the Govern-

ment may be absolutely certain that the Navy Vote will be taken on Thursday. My right hon. Friend suggested that to-morrow should be devoted to the Army, Thursday to the Navy, Monday next to the Vote on Account, and Tuesday to the Supplementary Votes. That involves three propositions—namely, that the Government are certain to get the Navy Vote on Thursday, the Vote on Account on Monday, and the Supplementary Votes on Tuesday. The Government understand that there is a large number of questions to be raised on the Vote on Account. The Government are not prepared to run the risk which would be involved; at least, we are entitled to vote against the Motion to report Progress. If we do not get the Army Vote to-night, we must have the Navy Vote on Thursday, the Vote on Account on Monday, and the Supplementary Votes on Tuesday.

MR. MOLLOY: What has been said amounts to this—that we shall not get the Army Vote to-night.

MR. GOSCHEN: I listened to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian the other day, and he acknowledged that the House would be bound to vote the money in time to carry on the Government of the country. Therefore, there is no choice. We are using no threats whatever. All we say is—and I believe with the concurrence of right hon. Gentlemen opposite—that we must get the money within a certain time.

MR. MOLLOY: It may not be the fact so far as the right hon. Gentleman is concerned, but it amounts to this—that we are now coming to the custom of the Estimates being forced through the House without anything like adequate discussion. I quite agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that some Votes of a non-contentious character may have been discussed at some length; but here we have a Vote which involves the whole policy of this country and its foreign policy, and to ask the Committee to close the discussion to-night is really absurd to common-sense men. We are told that we can have a general discussion on the items. I venture to say we would very soon be out of order if we did anything of the sort. We are accustomed to the ruling of the Chairman, and we know that in discussing a particular Vote we have to keep within the limits of that Vote. Now, the Government are taking their Estimates in a microscopic fashion; they are of so little importance. Yet the Secretary for War has made five speeches, and his Under Secretary two. My hon. Friend by my side rose, and on two occasions he was interrupted by the Secretary for War. One of the right hon. Gentleman's (the Secretary for War's) speeches was a mere repartee speech to one by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman). It was merely a personal encounter between the present and past War Secretaries. Several of us who have formed some opinion upon this subject desire to give expression to it; and looking at it fairly, it seems utterly impossible that this debate should close, and I protest against putting the House to the trouble of taking a Division.

MR. GOSCHEN: I move that the Question be now put.

THE CHAIRMAN withheld his assent, and declined to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan): I think the proposition of the Government is absurd. The argument, as I understand, was this—that we must first of all vote the money, and get the reasons for the Vote afterwards. Now, I take it that that is beginning at the wrong end.

It being Midnight, the Motion to report Progress lapsed without Question put, and the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

House resumed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 14.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSSION 1889. [MARCH 20.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 12th March, 1889.

VANCOUVER'S ISLAND—DEFENCE OF THE HARBOUR OF ESQUIMAULT.

QUESTION.

LORD SUDELEY had on the Paper the following Question:—To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Dominion Government of Canada have assented to the proposed arrangements for the defence of the harbour of Esquimault, in Vancouver's Island, which he stated last year had been sent out on the 12th June, 1888; whether the contemplated works have been commenced, and the armaments sent out; whether the Government will now state the date when the fortifications of this important harbour (being the headquarters of our Navy on the Pacific Station) will be completed, and the guns placed in position?

LORD ELPHINSTONE: I have to ask my noble Friend opposite (Lord Sudeley) whether he will be good enough to postpone for a short time the Question which he has put upon the Paper. If he will repeat the Question on a future occasion, I shall be able to give a much more complete and definite answer than I could at present.

LORD SUDELEY: I have no objection, of course, to postponing the Question, as the noble Lord asks; but I sincerely hope that the Government really intend to press forward this matter to a settlement. As your Lordships are aware, it is quite nine months ago since this Question was fully discussed, and the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies then stated clearly that the Government intended at once to fortify the harbour of Esquimault, and to make it secure; but, as far as I have been able to discover, up to the present moment nothing has really been done. Although this is our only harbour and coaling station on that coast, it is still unfortified and undefended; and there can be no doubt that if war with Russia should break out a great attempt would be made to seize and occupy it. I sincerely hope that the Government will really push the matter forward, and endeavour to get the Dominion Government to make some arrangement in regard to it.

House adjourned at half past Four o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 12th March, 1889.

The House met at Two of the clock.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) intimated that he did not intend to move the Motion of which he had given notice for the rejection of the Bill.

Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put, and agreed to.

MR. HUNTER: I beg to move, "That all persons who have presented Petitions against the Bill praying to be heard against the expediency of allowing the North British Railway Company to build a hotel or carry on hotel business in Edinburgh, be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, and Witnesses, upon their Petition if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petition." The question which I desire to bring under the notice of the House is one of considerable general importance. A petition in reference to this Bill has been lodged by various parties—some feuars, some shareholders, and some hotel keepers in Edinburgh—and the object of my Motion is that that petition shall be referred by the House to the Committee on the Bill. It is necessary that I should take that course because by the interpretation put on the Standing Orders by the Court of Referees hotel-keepers would not have a *locus standi* to oppose the Bill. I am not going to quarrel with the Court of Referees on the application which they have adopted of a somewhat general rule, but I think it will be necessary for the House seriously to consider whether the construction is not far too narrow and entirely contrary to the public interests. The point of objection to the Bill is that it adds to the proper functions of a railway company that which is no part of their business, viz., the business of an hotel-keeper. That statement will be disputed, but no one can read the Bill without seeing that the Company are attempting to obtain powers in an indirect manner. That will be a question for the Committee; but even granted that it is desirable that railway companies should add to their proper business of carriers innumerable other occupations, I think before that is done that those who are interested in the trades which these great monopolists seek to absorb have a right to be heard before the Committee on the subject. I think the policy hitherto adopted of permitting railway companies to undertake all sorts of occupations has been disastrous to shareholders themselves. In America, where railway companies are much more numerous and much more powerful, they have, by the wisdom of the Legislature of the United States, been most rigorously confined to their own business. Every railway company must be a monopoly to a greater or less extent, and the policy of the State ought to be to restrict that monopoly within the narrowest possible limits, and, as far as possible, to bring competition into play, because they know that the public are better served by competition than by any monopoly. Parliament awoke to the necessity of stopping the aggrandizing spirit of railways in regard to steamboat traffic. It appeared at one time as if the whole steamboat traffic of our ports would be absorbed by the railway companies. The Court of Referees, however, held that steamboat owners should be allowed to appear before the Committee as competitors in the business of carrying, and besides that, a Standing Order was introduced under which every railway company which sought for steamboat powers were compelled to put the words "Steamboat Powers" on the title of their Bills, so as to attract attention and give an invitation to steamship owners, to appear and state their views before the Committee. Everyone knows that if there is no petition against a Bill, it is not referred to a Select Committee, and the merits of the question are, therefore, never properly discussed, for however anxious the Chairman of Committees may be to look at the question from the point of view of the public interest, he is not armed with the knowledge that would be brought before the Committee by a genuine opponent. I know that in a number of cases hotel powers have been given to railway companies. It may be thought doubtful whether railway companies should be allowed to become the builders of hotels, but it is certainly bad policy to allow them to become the managers. The business of an hotel keeper depends upon individual energy, and cannot be discharged by a huge joint stock company. And if there is one thing more than another on which both the directors and chairmen of companies refuse to inform their shareholders, it is as to the success of their hotels. In these circumstances one is not uncharitable in hazarding the conclusion that the

reason is because they are working ing them at a loss. This loss has to be borne by the general body of travellers, who do not use the hotel. I do not ask the House to decide the question, or to express an opinion upon it, but simply to allow it to be discussed in Committee, and to allow hotel keepers, and others interested in the measure, to state their case, and to allow the Committee to form a judgment on the whole merits of the question.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That all persons who have presented Petitions against the Bill praying to be heard against the expediency of allowing the North British Railway Company to build a hotel or carry on hotel business in Edinburgh, be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, and Witnesses, upon their Petition if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petition."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

*MR. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): The hon. Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) professes to be very much in favour of the delegation of the authority of this House; but, at the same time, he is disputing the authority of a tribunal which has already been set up to deal with this very question. To a certain extent, I believe that the Motion of the hon. Member is altogether unnecessary, seeing that there are shareholders of the company who are opposed to my part of the scheme, and who will be entitled to be heard before the Select Committee. The hon. Member has gone into the question of whether railway companies should be allowed to own and manage hotels, but seeing that many of the railway companies do at the present moment hold and manage hotels, I do not see why, in the case of this particular railway company, the same privilege should not be conceded. Moreover, I believe that the hotel which this company propose to establish in Edinburgh will be greatly for the benefit of the public. The whole question was gone into in 1885, and the company obtained permission to alter and remodel their premises at the Waverley Station in Edinburgh. All that they now propose is that they should have permission to apply their capital to these purposes.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): The question is not whether the railway company ought, or ought not, to be allowed to build hotels in connection with their system; there are many cases in which it is for the public convenience that railway companies should be allowed to do so; but the question involved in this Bill is a very specific one—namely, whether the Committee who are to inquire into the Bill ought to be bound to hear the complaints of the hotel-keepers of Edinburgh who have establishments within sight of this railway station. It is perfectly well-known that unless some such instruction as this is given the hotel-keepers will have no opportunity of being heard, and will practically have no redress. Everyone who knows anything of Edinburgh must be aware that close to Waverley Station, almost touching the station, there is a cluster of hotels which up to the present time have, at great expense, supplied every accommodation to the travelling public. The sole question is whether these hotel-keepers should through counsel have an opportunity of stating their case. It may be for the public convenience that the railway company should have their own hotel, but it is for the public convenience that when a project of this kind is brought forward those who believe they may be injured by it should have an opportunity of stating their case.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): Hon. Members who have taken part in the debate have overlooked the real point in the question. We are not discussing the question whether this railway company should keep an hotel. Every railway company which has a terminus in London has an hotel, and there are others at York, Glasgow, Chester, Derby, Liverpool, and many other places which have been found of great convenience to the public. It is, therefore, somewhat late in the day to raise the question whether railway companies shall be allowed to keep hotels. The real question involved in the present Bill is whether the company shall be allowed to apply the money of the shareholders for an alteration or rebuilding of an hotel, which they were authorized to do two or three years ago.

MR. HUNTER: That is one of the points in dispute.

MR. COURTNEY: The Bill of 1885 gave express power to the company to alter, enlarge, remodel, and improve their hotel, and the same words are

introduced into the present Bill. The power remains exactly where it was. The company have hitherto been unable to apply their capital to this purpose, because they had not obtained the consent of the shareholders. That consent has now been obtained, and the simple proposal in this Bill is to enable the money to be applied to the purposes authorized by the Act of 1885.

Question put, and negatived.

Bill committed.

QUESTIONS.

THE WEST KENT MILITIA.

MR. CORNWALLIS (Maidstone): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether in view of the fact that for several years past the West Kent Militia have been encamped at Shorncliffe for their annual training, that Shorncliffe is at an inconvenient distance from the recruiting centres, that the only reason why the training was transferred to Shorncliffe was the fear of infection from an outbreak of small-pox at Deptford, and that now there is no danger to be apprehended from this cause, he will order the return of the Militia to Maidstone for their training during the coming season?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Whatever may have been the reason originally for transferring the training of the West Kent Militia from Maidstone to Shorncliffe, all the military authorities concerned, including the officers commanding the battalions, are of opinion that the military advantages of training at Shorncliffe far outweigh any advantages which could accrue from training at Maidstone. I am afraid, therefore, that I cannot revert to the former system.

BAILING PRISONERS COMMITTED FOR TRIAL.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the report of the trial, at Winchester Assizes, on Thursday last, of a young woman, who, after having been in gaol two months on a charge of concealment of birth, was acquitted, and "the jury considered that it was hard treatment of the girl to have committed her; the Judge agreed, and said the girl should have been allowed out on her own recognizances;" and, whether he will communicate with the committing magistrates with reference to their conduct in the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS, Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Clerk of Assize that the facts are as stated. I have called the attention of the committing magistrates to the opinion expressed by the jury and endorsed by the learned Judge.

FATAL ACCIDENTS ON RAILWAYS.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether replies have been received to the Circular Letter of 19th December, drawing attention to the remarks of Major Marindin as to the insufficiency of the rules applying to platelayers; and, if so, from what railway companies; whether any company has sent in to the Board of Trade regulations, either in existence before the Circular Letter or made subsequent to the Circular Letter, which give the protection to platelayers and permanent way men recommended by Major Marindin; whether his attention has been called to the fatal accident on the Cheddesden goods line of the Midland Railway, near Derby, on 24th January, and to the evidence at the inquest, that no watcher, or flagman, was posted to warn the gang of approaching trains; and, whether any further representation has been made to the Midland Railway Company since this fatal accident, that it is the duty of the company to make further provision, by regulations or otherwise, for the protection of men at work on the permanent way?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): Yes, Sir; some of the railway companies have sent in replies to the circular referred to; but I understand that the question is being considered by the Traffic Committee of the Clearing House, and I am awaiting the result of their deliberations before deciding what further action to take. As regards the accident referred to, which took place on January 24, I have seen the Coroner's Return, but not the evidence taken at the inquest. From the

remarks of the Coroner I learn that it was the duty of one of the unfortunate men who were killed to send out a flagman for the purpose of preventing any accident, but that on the morning in question he had not done so.

THE RECENT FLOODS.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether, after the experience of last week's floods, the Government are now prepared to encourage the newly-formed County Councils to establish a system of telegraphic storm warnings from the upper reaches of rivers to the low-lying districts below?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG, Wilts, Devizes): The Government are prepared to consider any representation which may be made by any County Council on the subject referred to.

IRELAND—DR. BARR.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a letter published in the *Times* newspaper of Saturday, March 9th, signed "James Barr," was written by a medical officer employed in Her Majesty's prisons; whether the writer is the person who was employed impartially to advise the Irish Government on the prison treatment of Mr. Mandeville and other prisoners connected with a political movement in Ireland; whether this letter was written with the authority and the knowledge of the Secretary of State; whether the rule against communicating to the public press by persons employed in the Civil Service on controversial matters relating to their department, which was acted upon in the case of the late Chief Commissioner of Police, applies also to medical officers in the prisons; if this letter is approved by the Secretary of State, was it by his direction that the *Times* newspaper was selected as the organ for its publication; and, what course does he propose to take with regard to the writer of this letter?

MR. MATTHEWS: The letter in question was written by a medical practitioner who gives part of his time to the duties of medical officer of one of Her Majesty's prisons. It was published without the knowledge or authority of the Secretary of State. The rule against private publications on matters relating to a department by officers attached to the department has been issued to the prisons service, and applies to those portions of Dr. Barr's letter which deal with English prison administration. Dr. Barr is the person who undertook a duty outside his official employment—namely, that of inquiring into the administration of prison rules in Ireland as compared with the English prison administration. He was subjected to virulent and undeserved personal attack for his performance of his duty. I am informed that the substance of his letter to the *Times* had been already given in evidence by himself and Captain Stopford at Mitchelstown. I have drawn Dr. Barr's attention to the rule against publications by official persons, and have requested him to observe it in the future.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I beg to give notice that in consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman I shall take the earliest opportunity of calling the attention of this House to the conduct of Dr. Barr, and his unfitness, from his bitter partizanship, to remain in the employment of the country.

GERMANY AND SAMOA.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College Division): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the following statements contained in a letter headed "Recent German doings in Samoa," and signed "Robert Louis Stevenson," published in the *Times* of the 11th inst.: that the British Consul at Apia having protested against a Proclamation by the German Consul arbitrarily suspending all authority except that of the German respresentative, the latter replied by a threatening proclamation "closing with a buffet the mouth of the English Consul"; that, in the course of these (recent) events, the German flag "has been at least once substituted for the English; that an English artist who had been sketching in Malietoa's Camp "was forcibly seized on board the British packet *Richmond*, carried half dressed on board the *Adler*, and detained there in spite of all protest until an English war ship had been

cleared for action"; whether there is any truth in these statements, and especially in the third; and whether he will lay before Parliament Papers relating to recent occurrences in Samoa?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I have seen Mr. Stevenson's letter. The statement is substantially correct; but I should add that the German Government have spontaneously disavowed the action of their Consul General, and he has since been recalled. The property referred to is probably a house which is in dispute, and is the subject of discussion. We have heard of the removal of British subjects from the *Richmond* by German armed boats to the *Adler*, and their subsequent release on the demand of the British naval commander. We know nothing about his having cleared for action. The German Government were asked for explanations, and replied that the German civil and naval authorities in Samoa have been instructed by telegraph not to subject the foreigners settled in Samoa to martial law, and to refrain from searching foreign ships for contraband of war. Papers are in course of preparation, and will be laid on the Table in the course of a few days.

DR. CAMERON: Are we to understand that we shall have Papers giving full particulars relating to the abduction of this British subject by the Germans?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: Yes; that transaction will be covered by the Papers.

MR. W. A. McARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell): Can the right hon. Baronet give us the names of the Commissioners?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I stated yesterday that as the date of the Conference has not been fixed, it would be premature to name the Commissioners. I am unable to say when I shall be able to name them, indeed, the number on each side has not yet been fixed.

THE PROCURATOR FISCAL OF SKYE.

DR. CAMERON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the amount of the payment made by the Treasury to Mr. M'Lennon, Procurator Fiscal of Skye, in respect of expenses incurred by him in defending the action "Macpherson *v.* M'Lennon;" at what date was it made; and out of what Vote was it paid?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The amount was £59 8s. 11d. The Treasury authority for payment is dated April 9, 1888, and the payment was made shortly after from the Vote for Lord Advocate and Criminal Proceedings, Scotland.

VOLUNTEERS AT ALDERSHOT.

MR. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what number of Volunteer Troops was attached to the Aldershot Division in August, 1888; what was the cost involved to the Department; and, whether the permission to do so is to be continued during the present year?

MR. E. STANHOPE: In August last 4,291 Volunteers were attached to the Aldershot Division at a cost of £4,226. There will be no drill this year at Aldershot similar to that of last year; but it is hoped that some of the brigades may be exercised there.

CANNON CARTRIDGE BAGS.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, S.W., Bootle): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the case that the material of which our cannon powder cartridge bags is made, is all manufactured and imported from abroad; whether it can be at present manufactured in the United Kingdom; and, if so, whether he has any objection to take steps to promote the manufacture of this silk cloth material in England, in order that in the event of war our heavy ordnance may be supplied with cartridge bags made from materials of British manufacture?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The silk cloth used for cannon cartridges is of foreign manufacture, and was adopted because it leaves no residue in the gun after firing. Some years ago two firms in Bradford commenced manufacturing it, but ceased to do so because they could not approach the foreign prices. We have, however, a standing contract with Messrs. Cochrane, of Paisley, for the supply of 300 yards per fortnight, and endeavours have been made to induce some Nottinghamshire firms to take up the manufacture. A considerable stock of this silk cloth is always

kept up so as to be secure against emergencies.

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE BATTERY AT WICK.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any negotiations are pending with the view of transferring from Wick to Thurso the Royal Naval Reserve Battery which has been established at Wick at considerable expense for over 12 years; or if there is any correspondence with the Admiralty there anent?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The question of transferring the Royal Naval Reserve Battery from Wick to Thurso has never been raised that the Admiralty are aware of, and there is no correspondence on the subject.

THE NAVAL PROGRAMME.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he can state approximately what is likely to be the annual increase of expenditure per annum for repairs, salaries, wages, provisions, pensions, &c., when all the ships that he contemplated building have been added to the Navy?

*LORD G. HAMILTON; The Question of the hon. Gentleman divides itself into two heads—the increase of cost for manning the new vessels, and the cost of their maintainence and repair. We estimate that for the first purpose it will be necessary during the next five years to increase the Vote for men in the aggregate by 5,000, and an approximate estimate of the cost of their pay and provisions will be between £250,000 and £300,000 spread over that time. I have not had time to have an estimate of their pensions calculated. The cost of repairing the new ships may roughly be calculated on the following basis. The older ironclads which have been constantly in commission, and the life of whose boilers is much shorter than that of ships of the most modern type, cost in maintenance and repair about 2 per cent per annum on original cost of construction; the cost of cruisers and other vessels is considerably less. A large proportion of these new vessels will not be constantly in commission, and their boilers will last longer than those of the vessels they replace. A deduction may, therefore, fairly be looked for in regard to both these points from the average estimate I have given. For the first few years that new vessels are in use the cost of repair and maintenance is very small.

FREE MONEY ORDERS.

SIR J. COLOMB (for Mr. HENNIKER HEATON): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Post Office revenue is recouped the cost direct or indirect, of the free money orders issued for Inland Revenue purposes and how many of the free money orders are issued in the nine months up to December 31, 1888, and if the number is increasing; and whether a sum of about one million and a half sterling was recovered by the Post Office during the last 12 months on accounts of the Inland Revenue, and what amount was transferred from the Inland Revenue to the Post Office for this service?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): The number of free money orders issued for the Inland Revenue purposes was 253,107 in the nine months ending December 31, 1888, and the number is increasing. The Post Office Revenue was not recouped directly or indirectly the cost of these orders. Such a course would be contrary to the well-established rule that one public department does not make payments to another public department services rendered to it by that other.

IRELAND—THE MURDER OF DISTRICT INSPECTOR MARTIN.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, under the Constabulary Regulations, any provision is made for the families of officers or men who may be killed or injured in the execution of their duty; and whether any provision will be made for the widow of the late District Inspector Martin, who was murdered at Gweedore on the occasion of the arrest of the Rev. James M'Fadden?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Man-

chester, East): The Constabulary regulations do not make any provision for the families of officers who may be killed in the execution of their duty. In the cases of men who are killed, or who die while serving in the force, provision is made for their families. In the cases of officers or men who may be injured in the discharge of their duty to an extent to prevent their continuance in the service, the officer or man is retired with a pension, or gratuity, according to the circumstances. As regards the case of the widow of the late District Inspector Martin, the Irish Government have recommended to the Treasury that she be granted a pension, and the matter is now under consideration.

THE IMPRISONMENT OF MR. DUNLEAVY.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the following statement in the *Leeds Mercury* of the 8th inst—

"Mr. J. S. Dunleavy, editor of the *Clare Independent*, was recently sentenced to three months' imprisonment. This was the charge—'Obstructing a policeman by laughing at him.' And this is how Mr. Dunleavy is treated in prison—'He is confined in a flag cell without matting. His application for furniture has been refused by the Visiting Committee. His sleeping accommodation is a hammock. The rest of the furniture in the cell is a stool.'"

Whether he can state of what offence Mr. Dunleavy was convicted, and what is the true character of his treatment in prison?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Proceedings were taken against Mr. Dunleavy under the ordinary law, not for laughing at a policeman, but for conduct calculated to lead to a breach of the peace in unlawfully abusing a police constable while in the execution of his duty. He was ordered to find bail to keep the peace, and be of good behaviour. This he refused to do, electing to go to prison for three months. He has been treated in prison under the rules for prisoners awaiting trial, and on the 5th inst., being the first meeting of the Visiting Committee after he was transferred to Tullamore, he was, on his application, granted by them privileges which included permission to furnish his cell, to receive certain daily and weekly publications, permission to write, the use of books, and permission to smoke twice daily. He has, however, only partially availed himself of the permission to furnish his cell, preferring to sleep on the prison hammock, which, he states, is very comfortable; and, further, although under the rules for prisoners of his class he could provide his own food, he only does so for the dinner meal, being apparently quite satisfied with the prison diet for breakfast and supper.

THE PONSONBY ESTATE.

MR. LANE (Cork County, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a reported sale of the Ponsonby Estate to a London syndicate, of which the hon. Member for South Huntingdon is a member; whether he is aware that this transaction took place at a time when negotiations for a purchase scheme were far advanced between Mr. Ponsonby and his tenants, and that it is stated, on behalf of the purchasers, that they bought this property to prevent the sale to the tenants, because the proposed terms would reduce the price of land in the district; whether there are over 300 tenants on this property, some of them holding farms which have been in possession of their families 200 years and upwards; and, whether, in the event of any evictions taking place on this property, the forces of the Crown will be lent to this syndicate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have seen the report, but have no official knowledge on the subject of this or the next paragraph. I will make inquiries, if the hon. Member wishes it, into the Questions asked in the third paragraph. I am not aware that any transaction of the kind referred to would alter either the *status* of the tenants, or the duty of the Government to support the Sheriff in the execution of the decrees of a Court.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I should like to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that negotiations for a settlement in this case had proceeded so far when Mr. Smith Barry and his confederates intervened; that the agent on the 21st of last month stated that he hoped his efforts for a settlement would not be in vain; and as this appeared to be a conspiracy on the part of a body of landlords to pre-

vent a settlement being come to between an Irish landlord and his tenants in a district where a conflict had been proceeding for two years, I beg to ask whether, as a matter of public policy, the right hon. Gentleman will have any objection to make some representation to Mr. Smith Barry and his confederates in regard to their intervention, which may result in the clearing away of inhabitants of the district, producing something like a state of civil war in the district?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not agree with the peculiar use of the word "conspiracy." As regards the latter part of the Question, I consider that to act as suggested would be an unwarrantable intrusion on my part in private affairs.

MR. LANE: May I ask if the right hon. Gentleman is aware that while the negotiations between the tenants and the landlord were in progress Mr. Smith Barry declared at a banquet in Cork that Ponsonby would never settle with his tenants; and whether on the following day Mr. Ponsonby's agent telegraphed in reply to Rev. Canon Keller, who had charge of the arrangements for the tenants, to the effect that the statement was utterly unauthorized?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I think the hon. Gentleman had better put the Question on the Paper: it is not a Question likely to be answered off hand.

MR. LANE: I will put the Question down.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Joyce, Mr. Shannon, and Mr. Horne are the three Resident Magistrates specially charged with carrying out inquiries under Section 1 of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; whether those gentlemen, or some of them, have been engaged in assisting the *Times* to obtain evidence; whether Mr. Horne was so engaged before the sitting of the Special Commission; how long he has been so engaged; whether he obtained leave from his ordinary duties at Westport for that purpose; and when such leave was first obtained; whether a district inspector of Constabulary was engaged in each divisional district in assisting the *Times* to procure evidence, or in some other relation to the *Times* case?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Resident Magistrates named in the first paragraph are not specially charged with carrying out inquiries under Section 1 of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; but they are, among others, legally qualified to hold such inquiries when called upon. So far as I am aware, they have not been engaged in assisting the *Times* to obtain evidence. No doubt they have rendered, and will render, any assistance in their power with a view to the elucidation of the various matters now under investigation before the Special Commission. Mr. Joyce and Mr. Horne were engaged in examining papers and statistics, &c., connected with crime in Ireland, in order that particulars could be furnished upon application being made either by the Commission or any of the parties appearing before it. It is not true that a district inspector was engaged in each division in assisting the *Times* to procure evidence. It is true that several district inspectors were engaged in tabulating information already in possession of the police—an obviously proper proceeding. And I have no doubt that all officers and men of the Royal Irish Constabulary upon demand give all proper information in their possession which is relevant to the inquiry.

MR. J. MORLEY: Do I understand that these magistrates and officers did nothing but tabulate statistics already in the possession of the police?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is the only thing, so far as I know, and as far as I am concerned, in which they did anything. But of course those subpœnaed by the *Times*, no doubt, as I have said, gave all the information in their power.

MR. J. MORLEY: To whom?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: To the persons who asked them for it.

MR. J. MORLEY: Who were they?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no knowledge of these facts at all. I have laid down a general principle, which I apprehend is right, that it is their duty to aid in the inquiry now going on before the Commission. So far as I am concerned, the only work they were engaged upon was this tabulated work.

MR. J. MORLEY: Is it not true that these officers volunteered to give information to the *Times*?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no knowledge of that.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE.—CONTRIBUTIONS OF COLONIAL GOVERNMENTS.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what is now the estimated cost of the ships building under agreement with the Australian Colonies, and how much of this will fall upon the Imperial Government; what will be the amount paid in respect of these vessels to contractors during the present year, how much will be paid during the year 1889-90, and what will remain over for next year?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The estimated cost of the Australian ships, including armaments, is £850,000. About £280,000 will be paid in respect of these ships in 1888-89, and the remainder should be earned in the subsequent year by the contractors. The Colonies pay for 10 years an annuity of £35,000 towards the cost of the construction of these vessels, and the cost of their maintenance up to the annual sum of £91,000.

IRELAND—MR. DAVITT AND SIR W. HARCOURT.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he has seen a letter in the *Freeman's Journal* of yesterday, purporting to be signed by Michael Davitt, reflecting upon the injured innocence of Sir William Harcourt, and whether there is any reason to believe this letter is a wicked forgery?

MR. SEXTON: Mr. Speaker, may I ask you, Sir, whether it is proper that a Question of this kind, reflecting upon a Member of the House, should be put without notice?

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question is one that cannot be put.

PROCEEDINGS IN THE HOUSE, MONDAY, 12 MARCH—CORRECTION OF THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

MR. THOMAS ELLIS (Merionethshire): I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, a question with regard to the Votes and Proceedings which were issued this morning. Last evening, after the Motion was made to report Progress, the Chancellor of the Exchequer claimed "that the Question be now put." Assent to that was withheld by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, but I find no record of it in the Votes. I beg respectfully to ask whether it is not proper that some record of the matter should appear in the Votes?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member was good enough to consult me upon the subject, and I have made inquiry. So far as I can learn what took place, while the House was in Committee, it appears that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did indicate his intention to move "that the Question be now put." (Several hon. MEMBERS:—[He moved it.] In my opinion the intention was sufficiently indicated and ought to appear in the Votes. The omission will be rectified in the next issue.

FATHER BYRNE AND LIEUTENANT GEOGHEGAN.

MR. THEOBALD (Essex, Romford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether Father Byrne has issued a summons against Lieutenant Geoghegan for creating a disturbance in his church; and on what ground he has done so, when the disturbance was created by Father Byrne, who incited the soldiers to mutinous conduct?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Question was not put into my hands until I came into the House, and I have had no information to enable me to answer it. If

the hon. Member will put the Question on the paper I will endeavour to answer that part of it which does not deal with any question which is before the Courts.

MR. SEXTON: Is the law now open to Father Byrne as well as to any other subject of the Queen?

THE LAND COMMISSION.

MR. LANE, for Mr. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many fair rent applications lodged with the Land Commission from the county Cork are still unheard, including applications by leaseholders; whether it is the case that, since the passing of the Land Act of 1887, the county Cork has had a Sub-Commission to itself, but that within the past two months the county Waterford was added to the district of this Sub-Commission; why this was done, having regard to the enormous arrears of land cases in county Cork; whether it is the case that the county Cork is now worse than before the recent appointment of additional Sub-Commissioners; what is the average number of Poor Law Unions at present included in the circuit of a Sub-Commission, and what number of Unions are now included in the circuit of the Cork Sub-Commission; and, whether he is aware that the effect of including so large an area in the circuit of this Commission has been to greatly hamper its capacity for disposing of business, in consequence of the long distances between the different sittings?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Land Commissioners inform me that the number of fair-rent applications from county Cork undisposed of by the Land Commission on the 1st inst. was 5,041. A Sub-Commission has sat more continuously in the county Cork since the 1st of November, 1887, than in any other county. The Sub-Commission at first consisted of four laymen. This number was increased to six in September, 1888. In February last two of the Assistant-Commissioners were transferred to the county Waterford, partly in respect of cases in unions which lie in both counties, and partly on the ground that there had been no sitting in part of Waterford for a considerable period—since November, 1887. The pair now in Waterford will soon return to Cork. The circuits of the Sub-Commissions are not fixed with regard to the average number of Poor Law Unions to be included in each, as the number of rent cases to be disposed of in each union always largely differs. At present there are as many Assistant Commissioners working in the county Cork as there were during the period from the 1st of November, 1887, to end of July, 1888.

THE MEMBER FOR ROCHESTER.

MR. PATRICK JOSEPH O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Member for Rochester has applied for the Chiltern Hundreds, or in any other form acquainted the Government of his intention to vacate his seat; and, if not, whether it is the intention of the Government to take any steps in the matter?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): The Chancellor of the Exchequer, to whom such applications are made, has informed me that no application has been made by the hon. Member for Rochester.

MR. THEOBALD: May I ask whether Members of Parliament who have been sent to prison, or are constantly being in prison, have applied for the Chiltern Hundreds?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not aware whether any such application has or has not been made.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for South East Lancashire (Gorton Division), in the room of Richard Peacock, Esquire, deceased, was moved for.

MOTIONS.

PRIVATE BILL COMMISSIONERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Craig Sellar, Bill for establishing a Commission to examine and report on Private Bills in Parliament, and for other matters relating thereto, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Craig Sellar, Sir John Mowbray, Mr. John Morley, Sir Lyon Playfair, Mr. Howorth, and Mr. Arthur Elliot.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 153.]

OFFICE UNDER THE CROWN (VACATING OF SEATS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Vacation of

Seats by persons being Members of Parliament accepting Office under the Crown, ordered to be brought in by Mr. W. F. Lawrence, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. A. D. Eliot, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Edmund Robertson, and Mr. Seager Hunt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 154.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

VOTE 1.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 152,282, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 149,667, all ranks, be maintained for Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1890."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

Debate resumed.

*SIR W. BARTTELOT (Sussex, N.W.): I think there is no one who will deny that the House has had put before it, in the statements of my noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty and of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War, a clear explanation of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the Army and the Navy. No one will deny the importance of the Navy, or that the Navy should be maintained in such a position so as to be able to command the seas wherever it may be placed. The question that we have more immediately to deal with, however, is that of the Army Estimates, and I think that when we look broadly at the question, and when we consider what has been done, or rather what has not been done, in days gone by, we shall not consider the sum asked for excessive. I certainly was surprised when I heard the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord R. Churchill) say that if the Army Estimates are to be increased as is proposed that certainly would show that the Navy Estimates ought not to be increased. Even hon. Gentlemen opposite who take a very different view to that which I hold in regard to these matters will admit that, considering the position of this country at the present moment in regard to its food supply, it is absolutely necessary that we should have command of the sea. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) last night referred to the Motion which was brought forward last year by me for a Commission with regard to the defences of the country, and expressed his approval of the action of the Government in opposing that Motion. But though the Commission was not granted, there can be no doubt that if it had not been for the discussion that took place on that Motion there would neither have been the Commission to inquire into the working of the War Office and Admiralty, presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, nor the Committee of the Cabinet, to whose Report it may be assumed that the present proposals of the Government are due. May I ask my right hon. Friend (Mr. Stanhope) in what position is the Commission at the present moment, and whether it is likely soon to report, because the questions referred to it, such as the relations between the War Office and the Admiralty are grave questions, and the sooner the House knows the exact opinion of the Commission on matters of that sort the better it will be for the country. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), it is right that the Cabinet should take questions of this kind into their consideration. The noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) said he knew the opinions of the Cabinet, but not the opinions of their military advisers. I think the country and the House would like to know what were the recommendations and what were the opinions of the military and naval advisers? I cannot bnt think that these opinions are in unison with the opinion of the Cabinet, and if so it is well that they should be expressed so that the country may know whether the Government are carrying out the defences of the country on the lines which those who are best able to judge have recommended to the Cabinet as being essential to the welfare of the Empire. The Secretary of State for

War has suggested a scheme of defence which will employ more or less all the forces which are to be found in this country, especially the Auxiliary Forces. He has told us it will take 124,000 men to garrison and maintain the different positions that are held to be of vital importance to the country. One thing I should like to say is this: 124,000 men, mainly of the Auxiliary Forces, are to occupy these various positions. Why not call out these men and let them see the positions they are to occupy? That would cost the country nothing, as the men, generally speaking, are to be found in the neighbourhood where they will be called upon to perform their duties. The Militia, which I do not think has received that attention which it ought to receive, when it is called out for its annual training, could be sent to work at those positions, and the country would know that the men were there and were likely to be efficient, and do the work required of them properly and efficiently. My right hon. Friend has also organized the Volunteers by Brigades, and there are certain Brigades, I presume, that are to go into line of battle in case of absolute necessity. I saw in a military paper that the War Office are only going to allow a certain portion of the Brigades to asemble. A more short-sighted policy could not possibly be found, because you would find a large number of men discontented if they are not allowed to go out with the battalion if it is called out for any purpose of the kind. The Brigade-Majors, too, are to be paid so small an amount that they will not like to accept the positions which will be offered to them. Efficient officers are absolutely necessary, and I hope there will be no false economy in so small a matter. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of earthworks which are to be erected. I hope he is not going to leave the construction of such works until the day of danger arrives. Earthworks are not costly in construction, and it would be much better for the men to know where the works are, and what they would have to do if danger arose. So much for the Volunteers. As to the Militia, I hope that some steps will be taken to put them in a more effective condition. Some regiments are excellent, but some are not up to the mark. I regard it to be the duty of the Government to organize all the forces we have at our disposal, especially those remarkably cheap forces—the Militia and Volunteers. Now, the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) has moved an Amendment to reduce the number of men by 2,600. What are these men required for? They are to maintain our garrisons in the Mediterranean and elsewhere, at stations necessary for the safety of the Empire. Some men talk as if we were going to hold aloof from everything happening elsewhere; but history shows that that is impossible. Nothing could be more detrimental to the working classes than that this country should sustain anything like an Imperial reverse, and especially that anything should happen to our stations in the Mediterranean, and at the Cape which are so necessary for the maintenance of our highway to India, Australia, and other possessions. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) could not support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester, but he sympathized with the object of the hon. Member, because he thought there ought to be no increase in the Estimates. If we intend to preserve our coaling stations, we require greater garrisons, and, therefore, I welcome the propositions of the Government upon this point. But upon the question of the Reserve I was sorry to hear what my right hon. Friend said. I hold it to be a positive duty of any Government to see that the Reserve is effective and efficient. Every man ought to be inspected, to see that he is effective and efficient, to see that he knows what his drill is. It is to a large and effective reserve of Army men and to our Auxiliary Forces that I look for a continuance of our freedom from conscription. We have only to look at Germany and France to see how the heart of the nation is eaten out by conscription, and how the women of both Germany and France are called upon to perform those duties which, if it were not for conscription, might, and ought to be, performed by men. Let me now turn to the question of Artillery. Do not let us blink the question that our Artillery is not what it was in former days when we had muzzle-loading guns. I think a step in the right direction is to make a distinction between the Garrison and the Horse and Field Artillery.

Men dislike going into the Garrison Artillery because they are deprived of opportunities of distinction. Something ought really to be done to make garrison service attractive, and to encourage men to learn the work. As it is every officer of Artillery does all in his power to avoid serving in the Garrison artillery, where scientific training is absolutely necessary in handling the enormous guns we now have; where also he finds himself in worse quarters; and where as soon as he is appointed, he endeavours not to learn his work, but to get into the Horse or Field Artillery as soon as possible. I desire to congratulate the Secretary for War on his determination to distribute to the Artillery 12-pounder guns, which, I am told, are the best arms of the kind in the world. I quite agree, too, that the Army and Navy should each have the duty of ordering its own guns. As to the Cavalry, I think every regiment ought to be made up to its full strength. In this island we may not require so many regiments, but the time may come when we may have to send Cavalry at a moment's notice for one or two Army Corps abroad. We might very properly copy either France or Germany, who look upon a reserve of Cavalry or Artillery as of no use until they had gone into training again, and therefore keep all their regiments of Cavalry and also their Horse and Field Artillery up to war strength. I do not agree with my hon. and gallant Friend, the Member for South Hampshire (Sir F. FitzWigram), that it would be well to decrease the number of regiments, but I do agree with him that all ought to be kept up to full war strength. In the next place, I musr protest against the Home Army being used to feed regiments in India. We ought to have for the Indian regiments separate depôts of older men, enlisted for a longer time than men are enlisted for home service. I suppose the 80,000 we are to have available will be exclusive not only of the 30,000 in Ireland, but also of the Army Reserve, or else we are doing nothing at all. If the Reserve men are called into the first line, how will gaps, which any campaign will naturally make, be filled up? I have asked before that we might see one of those Army Corps; and I think Aldershot is the proper place for the men to assemble. I cannot, for the life of me, see why an Army Corps, which might be sent abroad, we will say, in the course of a month, should not be assembled now and then at Aldershot, under those officers under whom it would serve. Each regiment—at any rate a certain number of regiments—should have five squadrons, and one of these squadrons, in the event of a regiment going on service, should remain at home for the depôt. My hon. and gallant Friend went so fully into the numbers of a regiment that I will say nothing on that point. Now, I have not heard a very great deal about the transport, and I am rather anxious about that. My right hon. Friend told us that all stores were to be decentralized. I think that that is a most desirable thing to be done, but I should like to ask him who is to be responsible for those decentralized stores? Are they to go into a particular district, commanded by a General Officer, who will be responsible for them, and see that the men have what they require in the event of an emergency arising? That is a point worthy of serious consideration. If they were to be surrounded by all the difficulties in getting at stores that at present exist, the gravest danger will arise in case of any emergency suddenly confronting us. I think, too, we ought to see that the Transport for the First Army Corps is in a state of efficiency. We are told by the right hon. Gentleman that he has 14,000 horses upon the register. But is nothing more to be done? If the Cavalry and Artillery have not their full and proper strength of horses, and if the Transport is not, at least, moderately complete in that respect; and if, as a consequence, these 14,000 horses are to be brought into use, how many will be fit for the work, and how many will be able to draw and take the heavy burdens which they will have to bear without notice? This is a matter which deserves serious consideration at the hands of the right hon. Gentleman. At any rate, he should insure that the Cavalry is always fully mounted. I think it right to make these few remarks, because we have had so many Armies on paper, and I desire now that we should have a real and efficient Army. I will conclude by making one remark, and it is upon a question which has occupied the

attention of soldiers for many years. The barracks were bad when I first entered the Army in 1839, and you may depend upon it they have not improved in condition since then. This is one of those cases which does not brook delay; it is one of those things which the Army have a right to demand and we are bound to grant. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Leicester and those who sit immediately behind him would, if prisoners were confined in gaols absolutely unfit for human habitation, make a great outcry, yet they do not seem to care whether money is found to provide proper lodging for our soldiers. A right hon. Gentleman last night found fault with the Secretary for War because he did not know exactly what would be the amount of money which would have to be spent on the barracks in order to put them in proper condition. But even the matter of barrack accommodation requires proper organization. It is necessary they should be placed in large centres, in close proximity to railways, so that the troops may be moved without difficulty; and I do hope that the scheme which the right hon. Gentleman will place before the House will be one which, when carried out, will put the barracks into a condition to last at least a century. I venture to hope that the House will never hesitate to do that which is necessary for the health, welfare, and well-being of our troops. I do not doubt my right hon. Friend will not spend any more than is absolutely necessary for the improvement of our barrack accommodation, and that what is necessary will be placed unreservedly at his disposal by the House.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): I desire, Sir, to revive the Amendment I moved yesterday, and I wish also to say one or two words in explanation. The hon. and gallant Baronet has referred to the necessity for improving the barrack accommodation, and has taunted us on this side of the House with being careless on the subject. But, Sir, we are not careless on the subject, and we should not object to any reasonable expenditure. If we have soldiers we must give them proper barracks. I trust, Sir, we shall not be thus taunted again. My Motion does not refer to the question of barrack accommodation. I moved that the number of men should be reduced by 2,615 men, which is the exact increase proposed this year. I object to the people of this country being called upon to pay for more soldiers, and I desire to hear something of the policy which requires this increase. I fear that it is a policy of aggression. The right hon. Gentleman has alluded to the possibility of a great emergency, and I should like to have some explanation as to that.

*GENERAL SIR E. B. HAMLEY: The right hon. Gentleman has given us a clear outline of parts of what may become a very comprehensive scheme. I say "may become," for we must remember that the object of all the measures which he has described can only be to bring the forces of the Kingdom, with the fullest effect which preparation can give, against an invader; and that these and all other such measures must be judged by the degree in which they promise to accomplish that result. But the only result which the right hon. Gentleman has pointed to is the occupation of certain positions round London where, in a few days, the defenders of London could be concentrated and entrenched. Now, there are two ways of looking at the defence of London, either as a duty to be undertaken by a comparatively small body of troops specially devoted to the purpose, and operating as near the capital as the conditions of ground and the spread of streets and houses will admit of; or, the interposing of the Field Army between London and the advancing enemy. In this latter case, the term "Defence of London" can only be applicable in the sense that the ultimate object of an invader must be to seize the capital, and that all operations against him may be said to be in its defence; but in this case the phrase loses its distinctive meaning, and is, in fact, misleading. But it is this latter case which the right hon. Gentleman appears to contemplate; he seems to speak of assembling the Field Army and the field portion of the Auxiliary Forces in these positions, in order to deliver there a decisive battle. But he also tells us that these positions are "round London," which must mean near London. Now, to choose ground near London for the first concentration of the Army would leave great part of the South of England to the mercy of the enemy. If he had

said that he meant to make here an ultimate stand for the defence of London his intention would have been clear, and in that case it would be well to strengthen the position, as he proposes, with works in which the Volunteers might most effectively co-operate with the regular troops. But the first concentration should take place as near as possible to the enemy's place of debarkation.

MR. E. STANHOPE: Nothing that I said was at all inconsistent with that. I especially reserved the Field Army as separate from the Volunteers, who would occupy this position.

*GENERAL SIR E. HAMLEY: To enable the Field Army to concentrate, by road and rail, on the menaced point, must be the primary object of our efforts. And in mentioning rail, I would say that the right hon. Gentleman's explanation would have been more complete if he had told us how he meant to bring the railways into the general scheme of defence. Again, when the right hon. Gentleman described the excellent and necessary step he had taken of dividing the stores of the Army and placing them at many points for ready distribution to the troops, we should have been glad if he could have told us also the selection of the points on lines of railway where magazines might be placed for ammunition. As to the assembling of the troops, I have no doubt that by the arrangement of Sir Redvers Buller this could be successfully accomplished in a very short time. In this connection the right hon. Gentleman made mention of the Reserves. He told the House how he wished, and properly so, to give them opportunities of exercise, but he also explained the difficulties he had found in the way. If for Reserve men we read Volunteers the case equally applies, and therefore I trust that the right hon. Gentleman is now convinced that I and other hon. Members were justified in the course which we felt ourselves obliged to take last year in opposing certain steps of his intended to invite the Volunteers to submit to fresh liabilities. With regard to the guns with which he proposes to supply the Volunteers, the right hon. Gentleman says that their value has been decried. This is unjust, because they are all that we have which are available and suitable. He then tells us that their calibre is more powerful than that of any which an invader could bring against them. But, in answer to this, I must observe that the power of guns does not depend upon their calibre alone; it also depends upon their range; and, supposing the enemy's artillery to be of superior range, he might take up a position beyond the range of our guns, and yet have our position within the range of his. I mention this only to show that they are only the best we now possess, and should be replaced by better ones; but I also admit that other kinds of guns are more pressingly needed. Some Members opposite object to the Estimates, because they are too large. For my own part, however, I lament that the right hon. Gentleman has not seen his way to repeat the loan which he obtained last year, because I believe the country was never in a better frame of mind to grant cheerfully all that may be necessary for our defence. All that the country desires is to be convinced that the steps proposed are necessary. This brings me to another point of great importance—namely, the defence of our commercial ports. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of the progress made in supplying these ports with submarine mines, but other things are necessary, namely, long-range guns to keep off a hostile cruiser, and to protect our floating defences and the works in which to place them. The right hon. Gentleman tells us he has made proposals to the municipal authorities of these ports, suggesting that they should bear their share of the expense, and he added that those proposals have been rejected. This I was very sorry to hear, because I wanted to see the commercial ports take a generous part in this enterprize. It appears that on the failure of the negotiations the project was brought to a standstill, but I would represent that the completion of these defences is anxiously looked for by the public. The results of some of the late naval manœuvres have strongly fixed attention upon this subject. Perhaps the postponement of this and other measures may be, in some measure, due to a certain theory which has been put forth by a school of naval opinion, with the best intention, I believe, but which is so extreme that it may be called extrava-

gant. The theory is that we should abandon every kind of land defence in order to concentrate our resources on the Navy. They affirm that if the Navy suffer defeat we have no further hope; that in a few weeks we should be starved into surrender: that no invasion is necessary to complete the conquest of this country; and that no amount of Land Forces would serve to avert our fate. The men who maintain this also state that the Navy is insufficient to protect us. If hon. Members put these two affirmations together—first, that the Navy is all in all, and, secondly, that it is incompetent to protect us—they will see that we have a very alarming prospect before us; so alarming that it is a good service to inquire whether it is true; therefore, with all the diffidence which a landsman must feel in opposing naval opinion, and with all deference to the decision which naval opinion may ultimately arrive at, I will venture to state the case thus. We have two kinds of naval defence. We have a fleet of battle-ships to meet the enemy's in a general engagement, and we have ocean cruisers to protect our trade lines against the enemy's cruisers. These two kinds of defence are distinct and separate. Now, supposing that our ironclad fleet has suffered such a series of discomfitures as to be driven to take shelter in our fortified harbours, it could not be imagined that the enemy could have effected that result without being himself in a crippled condition. Would he, with what remained of his fleet, undertake the blockade of all our important harbours throughout the whole extent of our shores? If he did, he would offer us an opportunity of attacking him in detail with the serviceable ships still remaining to us. Or would he take the alternative course, and collect his ships in one or two squadrons with which to attack our merchant vessels laden with food? Now, I confess that an attempt to intercept with ironclads swift ocean steamers, having such an extent of coast to make for, and such a large space of open sea in which to make for that coast, seems to me to be an impossibility. In any case, the theory that the defeat of our battle fleet would entail the destruction of our commerce and the cutting off of our food supplies is one of such a formidable nature that we cannot accept it unless it is absolutely brought home to us by proof. Assuming that there is a flaw in this reasoning, and that we shall still be able to receive our food supplies although our fleet had suffered disaster, it appears to me that we cannot too soon set about completing the defences of our commercial ports. It needs no argument to prove what an advantage it would be to ships making for those ports to find the ports open to them and closed to the enemy. But there is another point to consider in this relation. The advocates of the policy of abandoning all other attempts at defence except increasing the Navy would have much more reason on their side if we could go at once into the market and buy any number of warships ready made and armed and manned. I, for one, should in that case be most earnestly desirous of putting all the public money that can be made available into this truly national investment. But we know that even the approach to a sufficient fleet which is at length so happily to be made cannot take full effect for four years and a-half. What of the interval? We have frequently been assured of late that a great war cloud is about to burst over Europe. It is impossible to suppose that this prophecy relates to an event which is not to take place for four years and a-half. It must relate to something immediate. Thus we have this situation—an imminent crisis—an insufficient Navy—and when the Navy on its trial shall prove insufficient, nothing left but immediate surrender. Now, this situation is so appalling that the theories which point to it ought to be at once tested, and either admitted or rejected; and, if rejected, then we cannot too soon proceed with those measures of internal defence, which will not only fulfil our immediate purpose, but which will immensely increase the power of our existing fleet. But, before sitting down, I will touch once more on a matter of high importance in this great subject of national defence. I will once more venture to impress on the Government the importance of establishing by competent authority, and in open day, not secret conclave, a standard of our military requirements for the defence of the Kingdom and the Empire, with full details

of the amount of forces needed, of their distribution, and of the material necessary for them. I am aware that a plea has been set up against this, and it was yesterday concurred in by the right hon. Member for Stirling (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), a former Secretary of State for War. But I am totally unable to understand it, and I believe it cannot be understood by anybody who has not held office, which is an unfortunate position for a plea to stand in before the public. But I venture to believe that, until this is done, no measures that may be taken can be at once perfectly adapted to a sound general scheme, and perfectly acceptable to the country. I wish to acknowledge that the right hon. Gentleman's proposals are excellent so far as they go, and I shall therefore heartily support them, as I would any proposals for the Army or Navy which are good as far as they go. Indeed, I cannot but concur in them, for they are such as for many years I have been pressing on the public. It is, of course, a satisfaction to find that my ideas are in unison with the ideas of those who have power to give them effect. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having got so far on the right path, and I hope he may yet see reason to respond to the spirit of the nation and to seek larger means of giving security to the country.

GENERAL HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): I should like to be allowed to offer one or two remarks in regard to the statements made by the Secretary of of State for War. I entirely concur in the observations made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just sat down (General Hamley) regarding the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as eminently satisfactory; and I think the right hon. Gentleman may take credit to himself for the general concurrence with which the statement has been received by Members on this side of the House. I think he may congratulate himself that for the first time, in pursuance of what he began last year and is continuing this year, he has been able to present to the country and to the House a statement full, lucid, and clear, and giving us, I hope, a promise of something like definite conclusions from definite principles which have impressed themselves upon his mind in conjunction with the military authorities. In this respect, I am bound to say, there is nothing but praise to be given to the right hon. Gentleman's statement, but I am bound to qualify that praise by saying that if there is any criticism which may be pronounced upon the right hon. Gentleman's statement, it is that it is not so comprehensive a statement as it might have been. I doubt if the Committee of the Cabinet which, we are led to understand, sat to consider this subject, was itself sufficiently impressed with the possible necessities of the Army, taking into consideration what emergency may at any time arise in India as well as at home. I make that criticism not from any carping spirit, but in the hope that the right hon. Gentleman having made a great step in advance this year, may, in succeeding years, be able to continue in that right course, and be able to make still further satisfactory advances. He has gone not so much on the principle of desiring to increase largely or indefinitely the total number of men at his disposal, as upon the much better and safer and much more economical principle, much more useful and practical principle, of desiring to make the most of those which we already have in the United Kingdom. On this point I am in accord with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir G. Campbell), who spoke last night, and I think we ought not to make an addition to our total numbers until we feel confident that we have worked up to the fullest what we possess in the United Kingdom. It is almost impossible, except to those who have gone into the details of this subject, to conceive the large, latent, dormant military force we have in this country. I think the warmest praise is due to the right hon. Gentleman for having for the first time endeavoured to act upon the sound principle of trying to organize the whole of our military forces into a body which can be used for the effective defence of the country and the Empire. Our forces in this country consist very largely of a large body of Volunteers (225,000); and those who have, for the last 22 or 23 years past, seen this body rise by the spontaneous patriotism of the country—a body such as no other country possesses, but will be extremely glad to possess—must admit that the right hon. Gentleman's proposal for im-

General Sir E. B. Hamley

proving the organization of this force is one in the right direction. With regard to the Militia, I can congratulate the House on the assistance we received last night from the able and lucid speech delivered by the noble Lord the Member for the Petersfield Division of Hampshire; and, I trust, that will bear fruit in a Committee of Inquiry being instituted in whatever way may seem desirable to the right hon. Gentleman for the purpose of giving a stimulus to the Militia. The Militia are supposed to be 135,000 strong. They are the old constitutional force of the country, which in the Peninsular and in the Crimea Wars gave such enormous assistance to the Regular Army. They have, undoubtedly, within the last few years, been allowed to dwindle and fall off, for a reason which we cannot but be sorry for—namely, that it has, to a certain extent, been left in the shade by the more popular force of the Volunteers. I am not going to say a word in disparagement of the services that the Volunteers render, and are going to render, to this country. On the contrary, the only reference I will make to them is to express the hope that the right hon. Gentleman will be more liberal in his help to them when the necessity for it is pointed out. At present there is only a total of some 40,000 or 50,000 efficients in the Militia out of a nominal Establishment of 135,000. I am glad the right hon. Gentleman is not taking steps to increase the Militia Reserve on account of the reasons which are making the Militia itself unpopular, but I do hope that some steps will be taken before it is too late to give this force an impetus and to make it more popular. I was very much struck by what the right hon. Gentleman has done in the way of putting the Volunteers into an available movable force which may be brought to the front in addition to the Regular Forces in case of an emergency. Everything the right hon. Gentleman has done in that respect is a step in the right direction, only he has not gone quite far enough. He has put a part of them to garrison duty, and 120,000 he has put into movable Brigades, which are intended to aid the Regular Forces in case they should be called into action. It is impossible for the right hon. Gentleman, or the country, to form at the present time any idea—and I say it advisedly—of the extent to which the military qualities of the Volunteers can be developed by judicious treatment, but we must be liberal in the way of money as well as praise. There are to be 31 Brigades, but the right hon. Gentleman has not made provision for nominating efficient staffs, and it seems to me that it would be absurd in this case to risk the loss of a good ship for a pennyworth of tar. The staff vacancies in the Brigades have only been half filled up. The right hon. Gentleman himself, as a colonel of Volunteers, knows how necessary it is to fill up those vacancies in order to secure efficiency, and I hope he will see that this is only one step in the further development of the operation of bringing the Volunteers into an effective condition. I have seen with some regret the statement made in the public Press—it may be entirely unfounded, however—that the Easter operations, which in the past have been attended by 50,000 or 52,000 men, are likely to be curtailed very much this year. This would be greatly to be regretted, and I think it would be very desirable for the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the details of this matter, and to see if some further concession could not be made to the Volunteers, so as to enable them to go out in the same numbers as they did before this Brigade organization was adopted. With regard to the proper organization of Cavalry, it is too much to expect, with the many things the right hon. Gentleman has in hand, that he would have been able to deal with this matter this year. The details have been so very fully given by the Member for South Hants that I will not go over them, but I am sure there is no question which at this time requires more to be looked into than the question of the efficient condition of our Cavalry. We have one broad fact before us, that with 12,000 men we have only 6,000 horses. We have an assurance that the right hon. Gentleman is not going to carry out the scheme of forming ammunition columns from the field batteries, which I was very glad to hear, but I confess that I should like to know a little more of the details of the plan which he intends to substitute. He has constituted fifteen columns on paper, but I am afraid that when he comes to fill them up with 100 men and 75 horses each, linesmen and horses will still have

to be drawn from effective batteries of Artillery. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would adopt the other alternative of taking the horses from the reserve of horses which he has registered, and the drivers from the reserve of drivers of the Royal Artillery. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman say last night that the Army Corps to which he referred was intended primarily for the defence of the United Kingdom. It must be recollected, however, that with these proposals to put 80,000 Regular troops under arms in this Kingdom, 120,000 Volunteers would also be placed under arms. Has the right hon. Gentleman ever contemplated what would be the number of field guns required for an army of that sort? He has told us that he proposes to create 67 Volunteer Batteries of Artillery, or a total of 238 guns, and I hope that will be carried out, because it will leave the 80,000 Regulars intact, with their own proportion of guns, which is now small enough in case they should be required, not for operations in Europe, but for the reinforcement of batteries in India. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware of what has been done in previous years in this matter. Promises have always been made to us that a sufficient number of batteries should be kept for the reinforcement of batteries in India should the contingency ever arise. This is why I say that the whole scheme is not looked at so comprehensively as it might have been. If at any time the Indian Army may have to take the field in numbers not less than 200,000, there are only 318 guns in India, and to give those 200,000 men their proper complement of guns would absorb the whole of the weapons available. I hope, therefore, the earnest efforts of the Secretary of State for War will be directed to the completion of those 67 Volunteer field batteries which he has indicated. I should like to say something with regard to the remarks of the right hon. Member for Bridgeton, as it has, in part, been conceded by the Government that a reduction should be made in the effective Generals' list. I should like to know whether he has followed the conclusions arrived at in 1881, when the Member for Bridgeton made the same raid upon the Generals' list, and, as the result of his somewhat misguided efforts, he established the very worst principle of selection that ever was established in the world—a haphazard system, a chance system, a system not based upon the merits of the individual. That principle of selection has resulted in eliminating from the list of General Officers of the Army some of the very best men, while it has retained men of inferior merits. If the right hon. Gentleman is congratulating himself on what he did in 1881, and will take the list of the year and ask anybody acquainted with the merits of the officers affected by it to go through the list with him, he will find what I say is correct. I hope the Government, while accepting the principle of the right hon. Gentleman regarding a reduction in the Generals' list, will not accept any advice from him as to the mode of carrying it out. The popular idea is that a General Officer is a man who has attained to a grade in which he receives pay for doing nothing at all, but, like everybody else in this practical country, a man to lead bodies of troops must have acquired efficiency by daily practice in doing so. That is the reason why in this country, which keeps only a small number of troops under arms in time of peace, it is necessary we should have some reserve of General Officers, for the purpose of leading an army. I only hope, if the reduction is made, it will be made wisely and well; but I think that should be done not by the haphazard cutting down which was proposed, but by a judicious and wise reduction, such as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War will carry out in conformity with the advice of the Duke of Cambridge last year. For my part I only hope that the reduction will be made both wisely and well, and on a principle as far as possible opposite to that laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bridgeton (Sir G. Trevelyan). The general principle the Secretary for War has adopted, seems to me to indicate great progress for the future, and if he will only act on the sound advice which is always at his disposal on the part of competent military advisers, and avoid being misled by the panic-stricken theories of those who really know nothing of what they talk so much about, he will do well both for the Government and the country.

*Sir G. TREVELYAN: The character of the hon. and gallant Baronet, who has

just spoken, stands so high in regard to military matters that I cannot pass by an expression he has let drop, although I feel assured, from the silence with which it was received by the Committee, that it was regarded as an erroneous reference to what occurred here some five years ago. The hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke of my having recommended and brought about the present system of appointment to the Generals' list. It will, I am sure, be within the recollection of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House that that recommendation was—reduction of the list of Generals, selection by merit of those placed on that list, and continuous service on General's pay and General's duties when once put upon the list. But, unfortunately, the Government, doubtless under the advice of the military authorities of that time, accepted only part of that proposal—namely, the reduction of the list of Generals. They did not accept the selection of men fit to be Generals, and, afterwards, their continuous employment on Generals' duties. It is true that my efforts did bring about the change, but the hon. and gallant Member will doubtless allow that the system which I recommended five years ago was in all respects the same as I recommended to the Committee last night. I have no doubt Her Majesty's Government will complete the good work that has been so long doing, and that when they alter the list of Generals, they will do it on the principle recommended last night, and which the hon. and gallant Gentleman recommends now—that is to say that whether the list be large or small, it shall be a list of as many Generals as the country wants, and in carrying out that change, and in selecting the men to fill the post of General on the list, I am quite certain Her Majesty's Government will bring about a great reduction of expenditure.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: There are two questions in connection with the matter before the House to which I desire to refer. One is the question of the Army in India, and the other is that of the defence of the Coaling Stations. I quite agree with what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman in reference to the Army in India. I have worked it out on the basis of certain figures, and I believe that that Army would be found much more efficient if it were made a Long Service Army, because the bringing home of the Short Service men and their kits adds enormously to the cost of maintaining that Army. With regard to the Coaling Stations, they ought, in my opinion, to be garrisoned by Marines, and to carry out this proposal I would increase the Force of Marines to whatever strength might be necessary, having such a number as would be able to garrison the Coaling Stations and take up their duties with the Fleet as well as in the Reserve, in regular rotation. There can be no doubt that this would not only be enormously cheaper to the country, but that it would add enormously to the efficiency of the Service, because we should get better men in regard to age and experience, and men who, at any moment, could be put on board ship. They should be put under their own Generals, and this would put an end to any of the disagreeable things that might otherwise occur in reference to those having authority in time of war at the different coaling stations. I know that my right hon. Friend cannot do this all at once. He has done a good deal under the routine system that has been established, and I do hope that now he will be able to make a settlement of this question. We have all listened with interest to the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman below me (Sir E. Hamley) in regard to the question of fortifications. It is a mistake to suppose that Navy men are opposed to fortifications. What we say is, that, first and foremost, we must get our Navy in order, and should then set to work to fortify the ports around the country. The hon. and gallant Gentleman advanced the theory that in case our Ironclad Fleet had suffered discomfiture, the enemy must also have sustained a good deal of damage, and would be unable with the remains of his fleet to blockade our harbours without risk of being attacked in detail by the serviceable ships remaining to us. He also said the enemy might destroy a certain number of vessels, but would be unable to so utterly destroy our commerce as to cut off all our supplies. As to invasion, I do not believe in the fears entertained with regard to such a contingency. If once our Fleet

is beaten, why should the enemy attempt to effect a landing on these shores, with the chance of losing so many men and ships and the risk of being attacked from the rear, when he would be able to starve us into terms by stopping our food supply? I do not wish to join in what is described as a scare in regard to the invasion of this country, and I feel quite sure the idea is not one that will create any great amount of fear among the people. With regard to what was said about reform, I hold that reforms should come from inside, and until they do I do not think we shall ever see them carried out in an economical way. My right hon. Friend has told the story of how guns were supplied to the fleet without ammunition. What I wish to point out is that we are under the same system now, only we happen to have men who are working it in the best way they can; but the same thing is likely to happen again if once we get a bad lot of men in the Service. The hon. Member for Leicester has said that the officers of our Army are always asking for more money, and he has taken exception to the references made to the German Army on the ground that that Army is, owing to circumstances, in an exceptional position. But what is the reason the German Army, which is the life of the German Nation, costs less, in proportion, to our Army and is more efficient? There is no reason why our Army should not be as efficient in all its details as the German Army. What is the reason why, at the present moment, there is the difference that has been pointed out? It is because the experts in Germany have gone into all that is necessary for defence, and their opinions are consulted in whatever has to be done. What we hold is that the opinion of the experts should certainly be taken before the Estimates are prepared and the money is voted. My right hon. Friend will say I am unduly finding fault with him. I am not finding fault with him, but with the system. I think he has done more than any other Minister who has occupied his position to alter the old system and try to get a better service. My right hon. Friend was asked whether the Estimate he had brought forward was his, or whether it was that of an expert; and he has told us distinctly that it is his Estimate and not that of an expert. The present system, however, under which military experts report to the Secretary of State, and their opinions are accepted or rejected is, I think, open to grave objections. It may not be desirable that such opinions should be publicly stated to the House, but they ought at any rate to be brought before the Cabinet before they decide what is necessary for the Army, and till this is done depend upon it you will have these scares and fancies, and will be asked to state in a definite and understandable manner what is necessary to be done.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cockermouth): I am very glad that the proposition to report Progress last night was not approved, and I think the discussion we have had to-day has been very useful. We have had an immense amount of military experience given us this morning, and it will appear presumptuous for a civilian to take part in the discussion, because it is thought by many Members of this House that nobody is qualified to take a share in it save those who are themselves members of the Army. ["No!"] Well, I understood so. If it were merely a question of the best arrangements of the Army, or which weapons would be best in the interests of scientific slaughter, I should certainly not presume to trouble the Committee any farther. But on this Vote, which involves the whole of our military policy, because it relates to the number of men, I contend, though a humble Member, I am quite as competent to form a sound opinion upon that question as any General, Captain, or Admiral in this House. Two of my right hon. Friends on the Front Opposition Bench said the policy of non-intervention had been pretty well accepted by all Parties in this country. But when I hear the word "non-intervention," I always remember the answer of Talleyrand to the lady:—"Non-intervention, Madam, means—much the same as intervention," I was glad to hear my right hon. Friend (Sir G. Trevelyan) say last night that the time had come when we should recognize the responsibility of this country again placing an Army in line with Continental Armies. And the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs spoke very much in the same

way. Nobody contradicted on the other side, and I suppose their dicta were pretty well accepted. If that be the case I am justified in assuming that ostensibly our Army is for defence. Against whom do you want to defend yourselves? The Queen's Speech of February, 1888, and of this year, speak of the continued friendly relations with foreign Powers; but if that be the case, it is an extraordinary and monstrous thing that the Government should come down and say "because we are friends with all the world, we must have £21,000,000 more for 70 ships and we must have 2,615 more men, to defend ourselves against those friends who are in such cordial relations with us." It is a most monstrous proposition, Mr. Courtney, and I am sure anybody, who thinks for a moment, will agree with me. What would you think if you were told that two parties of aborigines were friendly, on hearing that they were going to build a large fortification, or if the Secretary for Ireland said he had succeeded in pacifying Ireland, and then asked for a large number of police to protect the people? Yet we, being at peace, are asked for this increase of the Army and Navy. I sometimes think that the House is out of its mind with these extreme military preparations. The Queen's Speech spoke of the necessity of increased precautions for the safety of our shores and commerce, and, while saying that our relations were friendly, said, we had no right to assume that this condition was secure from the possibility of change? (hear, hear). An hon. Member says "hear, hear." I do not know any position in this world which is necessarily secure from the possibility of change. I would like to ask the hon. Member who says ["hear, hear!"] whether he knows of any condition of life which is free from the possibility of change. The fact is there is no more probability of a change this year in our relations than there was last year. We must take these Votes of the Army and Navy together. We cannot dissociate them. It is a question of what armaments we require; and, as I have stated, my starting point is that both the Army and Navy are required for the defence of our industry and commerce. I do not believe that either is for defence. When the Volunteers were started people recognized the motto, "Defence not Defiance," as quite a new thing, showing that in their hearts they had hitherto regarded the Army as for defiance and not defence. ["No" *and laughter.*] I hear some hon. Member laugh. Let him tell me of a single instance since the conclusion of the great war with France of a war in defence of this country. It is always defence not defiance which is involved in your military preparations. The War with China was to poison the Chinese with opium. The Zulu War, the Boer War, the Burmese and the Egyptian Wars, one to stifle a new Republic, another a burglary, and another to get money for the bondholders, besides the 30,000 soldiers kept in Ireland to strangle national life, were all means of defence. Well, but suppose these proposals are for defence, am I to believe all the stories which are told by the colonels and admirals and generals on that side of the House? I have a sincere respect for them, but I do not believe them a bit, because they have always been wrong ever since I have known anything of this House. The prophecies of these military and naval men have been utterly wrong. But, unfortunately, the people of this country have believed them; they are very credulous, and they can swallow a great deal. When I first came into the House Sir John Pakington was reconstructing the Navy, and we were told that when it was reconstructed we would be quite safe. Then it was said, only get fortifications, and everybody can keep in their beds. Everybody knows that the money spent on fortifications was a simple and unadulterated waste of money, and it might as well have been thrown into the sea. With the Volunteers, we were told, we must be safe. I remember the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham telling what a Yorkshire farmer said when the Volunteers were started:—"Well, we always thowt there were a power of fools in the country; but we never had any way of pointing them out afore." Well, after all this re-modelling and re-constructing, we are now asked for £21,000,000, 70 more ships, and 2,600 men. But that is not the end of it. What is Lord Wolseley doing? Why he is going up and down

the country under the patronage of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and is calling for a conscription. I do not know what is going on in this way, and whether we are to have every man, woman and child enlisting, but this I did see in the *Daily News* of this morning an advertisement announcing that at the United Service Institute on Friday a lecture will be delivered on the employment of dogs for military purposes. But I am not attacking the way in which you are going to carry on warlike operations; have "dogs of war" or whatever you like, I attack your policy solely. If you are going to defend yourselves against all possible combinations against you, you will require far more preparations than these you purpose. I saw a statement the other day that, taking the great European Powers, Germany, France, Austria, Russia, Italy, and the Balkan Provinces, there are some 28 millions of men more or less ready to engage in fighting, and is it not utterly absurd to attempt to vie with these great Continental Armies? Let me read a quotation from the *Observer* newspaper, which I think puts the case very well:—

"In one sense of the word no price is too high to guard the country against invasion, but the price of averting the mere risk of invasion may easily be too high. As in a question of insurance, the cost of a premium may be so heavy as to make it worth a prudent man's while to run the risk, rather than make such provision against a possible contingency. In other words, the struggle for life makes life not worth having."

That seems to me to put the case very well. Is life worth living by many wretched people in this country? Hon. Members may laugh, but I was one of those who the other day listened to that melancholy catalogue of the miseries endured by classes of starving people in this country, given by the hon. Member for N.W. Lanark (Mr. Cuninghame Graham). He described how the people were struggling in the depths of ignorance, wretchedness and misery, and I say it is a cruel thing to pay away the money of the people as a protection against phantom foes, while you have all the forces of poverty, misery, ignorance, vice, and crime in your midst. I know what the answer is. I shall be told it is impossible to reduce our forces, so long as other nations of Europe keep up their large armies; but let me quote once more, before I sit down, the words of a great statesman, and a sentence from a great philosopher. I think in these quotations I shall point out, in better words than my own, what I think is the real policy to pursue, by which you will get rid of this enormous expenditure. So long ago as 1841, Sir Robert Peel—and you know there never was a more sagacious, prudent, common-sense Minister than he ever sat in Parliament—said—

"It is for the interest of Europe that the nations should come to a common accord to enable every country to reduce these military armaments, which belong to a state of war rather than of peace."

I wish we could influence the public mind to enforce this doctrine on the Government. Now listen to Bentham—

"Whatever nation shall get the start of the others in making proposals to reduce and fix the amount of armed force will crown itself with everlasting honours."

I say that is the true policy; but I have heard or read nothing of any statesman having made an attempt to carry out such a policy. In my humble opinion it should be tried at once in the interests of this country and the world, and until it has been tried, I, for one, as a humble representative of the people, refuse to vote one shilling or add one man to increase those hideous bloated armaments—at once a disgrace and burden, and a danger to a country that professes to be Christian, and pretends to be free.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I hope I may now be allowed to make an appeal to the Committee to come to a decision upon the question before us. The Committee will remember that it is absolutely necessary to take the Vote for men to-day; and if we do not obtain that, it will be impossible for us to comply with statutory requirements, which I am sure the Committee desire should be observed. It is absolutely necessary, and I would make an appeal to the Committee in the strongest terms to come to a decision. I am reluctant to take up any part of the small remaining portion of time at our disposal, especially after the full measure of indulgence accorded to me yesterday; and, in answering the questions put to me, I will be as brief as I can. The hon. Member for Leicester, who moved

the Amendment in terms of which I have no right to complain, and who confined his observations within the limits of his Motion, asks the Committee to reduce the number of men by 2,600. Well, I know this House prides itself on being a business-like Assembly; but would it be consistent with that character if, after the House voted money for the purpose of fortifying our coaling stations and putting them in a proper state of defence against attack, we were to stop short in the middle of our work and say, "We will not grant the Government money to garrison these works." The proposition is so absurd that it is only necessary to state it as explaining the reason why this Motion of the hon. Member for Leicester must be resisted. Among the questions put to me, I take first that in regard to the Cavalry, several hon. Members having asked me to take up the question of Cavalry re-organization. No doubt the Committee must have observed most of the hon. Members who touched upon this subject were exceedingly unwilling to express any opinion of their own as to the means by which this re organization was to be effected. I know that the hon. and gallant Member for Hants (General Sir F. FitzWygram) was an exception. He gave us a complete scheme of re-or anization, but the Committee will have noticed that his scheme, which was a large and in itself a complete measure of re-organization, was not only received with some doubt and hesitation by other Members of the Committee, but several intimated that they altogether opposed the plan of my hon. and gallant Friend, and therefore I think he will understand how, in my responsible position, I feel the full difficulty of the task he would invite me to undertake. Before I could do that, I must feel satisfied that the steps I recommend will really tend to the advantage of the Service. Then a good deal has been said about the new arrangements for Volunteer Field Brigades. I think the country is to be congratulated upon the officers whom we have been able to get for the command of these brigades, and I must say there are none of them to whom thanks are more due than those who have seen such service as the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (General Sir Henry Havelock-Allan) who has very kindly undertaken the command of a brigade. From his knowledge and experience Volunteer officers will derive the greatest advantage, and to him and others the country will owe a debt of gratitude. But he and other hon. Members have to-day alluded to some of the difficulties to be encountered in the organization of these Field Brigades. It is impossible to free the plan from every difficulty, but I am prepared to meet them as fairly as I can. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has referred to the question of paid Brigade Majors. I do not like to use the word paid; it was never intended that they should be paid; but what we did hope was, that we should be able to offer them a reasonable allowance to compensate them for the extra outlay they were put to. It may be that in some cases the amount was fixed too low, but that is a matter for the consideration of the Department after full experience of the difficulties to be met. Certainly, I did not mean to lay it down categorically that we would not move by one inch from the position we have taken. In Militia battalions, again, there are difficulties to be encountered, and no doubt we run some risk of putting difficulties in the way of other meetings of Volunteers. It is not our desire, in the least degree, to limit the Easter gatherings, although we place in the first rank the importance of exercising the men in the new brigades. In cases where battalions are not able to join, we are still anxious to encourage Easter gatherings, as calculated to encourage efficiency in the force. Then I am asked a question by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Birkenhead (General Sir E. Hamley), whom I thank very much for the able and clear—criticisms, I was going to say, but they are scarcely that—comments on the scheme I have proposed. I know that in the matter of defences of this kind, and especially that of London, we owe very much to his teaching and experience. I have had the privilege of consulting him on the subject, and any observations of his are entitled to great weight in the House and in the country, and will receive most respectful consideration from myself. I am not quite sure whether my hon. and gallant Friend heard one part of my speech last night, because he specially called attention to the desira-

bility of concentrating our Field Army on positions such as railway junctions, whence they could be easily moved to points of danger. I explained that this was a cardinal part of my proposal. Troops will be concentrated on railway junctions and similar places mapped out, and will be enabled to entrain at a moment's notice, and proceed to any point of danger. My hon. and gallant Friend also alluded to the defence of commercial ports, and I think my noble Friend (Lord Charles Beresford) did the same. I really think I may leave those two speeches to answer each other; but I can assure my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Birkenhead there is no desire for a moment to abandon the proposals put forward for the defence of commercial ports. I have already explained that certain defences will be carried out in any case; but my offer of breech-loading guns to the ports without offering to pay for land, &c., was made on the ground that localities should contribute towards the cost of their own defence in some way. We indicated several methods, and I issued a Memorandum in which it was suggested that the towns should find the sites for the fortifications if the War Department found the guns. I do not think that was an unreasonable proposal at all, and I know in several instances towns have acquiesced in it. I am not all dismayed at the reception my proposal has met with in other instances. There is a distinct desire to close with our offer in reference to the defence of the Tees. The Municipality have expressed their readiness to meet us in a reasonable manner, making an offer that we should take the land at a nominal rent, and we have gladly accepted that course; the guns will be mounted as soon as the works are complete. I hope, in respect to the other ports, we shall come to a somewhat similar arrangement. My noble Friend (Lord C. Beresford) has raised an important question, how the garrisons for the coaling stations are to be provided, and has suggested that, in many cases, Marines should be employed. Well, I do not wish to express any definite opinion. I know there is much to be said for his proposal, and it is one that has been and is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. If we find, after very careful examination from every point of view, that of economy as well as efficiency, that it is a proposal we are justified in accepting, we shall not hesitate to do so. My hon. and gallant Friend behind me (Sir Walter Barttelot) asks me when the Royal Commission now sitting on the administration of the Army and Navy may be expected to report; but I do not think he can really expect me to give an answer, for I have no control over the proceedings of the Commission. But, I observe the Commission has been sitting very assiduously, and I understand its Sittings will shortly recommence. Further than that I am not able to go, though I may say I hope the Commission may report shortly, for then we should be able to carry out several contemplated changes that are suspended pending the presentation of the Report. Again, I would earnestly press upon the Committee the urgent necessity of the case, and allow a decision to be taken on this Vote now.

*Mr. WOODALL (Hanley): I am reluctant to intervene between the right hon. Gentleman and the decision of the Committee; but, in the absence of my right hon. Friend the Member for Stirling under whom I served, I must protest against the statement made last night, and which has attracted much attention, to the effect that in the preparation of the Estimates for 1886 the amount required by the Admiralty for projectiles and ammunition for quick-firing guns was struck out of the Estimates.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Ammunition.

*Mr. WOODALL: I am unable, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, to vindicate the action then taken without reference to confidential documents, some of which I have not now in my possession; but, as I had some subordinate part in the preparation of the Estimates, afterwards adopted by the Secretary of State and submitted to the House, I may be permitted to ask the attention of the Committee to the Estimates actually submitted, a copy of which I have now before me, in which provision is clearly made under Vote 12 for ammunition in the column wholly devoted to sea service, and there is an item of £32,600 for ammunition for quick-firing guns. Further, a little lower down, I find a sum of

£159,000 submitted for projectiles, also for sea service. Now, it is perfectly true that the demand of the Navy in these particulars was curtailed, but the right hon. Gentleman will agree with me that there never has been a period without some such curtailment. We have to cut our coat according to our cloth, and reductions are considerately and proportionally made. But, as was explained by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) in reference to the method of dealing with naval demands, there was a Conference at the War Office between the Secretary of State and the First Lord at which I was present, and at which a happy medium was arrived at, and the amount entered was agreed upon equally on the responsibility of the War Office and the Admiralty. Another allusion was made last night in reference to barrack accommodation. "When," asked the Secretary for War, "did my right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) become acquainted with the fact that barrack accommodation was demanded?" In 1886, it will be remembered, the Government came into office well on in February, and they were under the same obligations as the present Government are to get these Votes early in March. They found the Estimates in a complete state of unpreparedness, and the Government they succeeded had been spending freely on these Services from the large amount placed in their hands by the Vote of Credit. In these very Estimates large provision was made for barracks at the Curragh, at various places in Dublin, at Portsmouth, Gosport, Aldershot, and elsewhere. But this was done before they became acquainted from personal inquiry with the absolute necessities of the case. The right hon. Gentleman and the Secretary of State who preceded him were in possession of the information we left, and they might have been expected to make good the deficiency. I hope the Committee will excuse this interruption; but I feel very strongly that an injustice was done to my right hon. Friend.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): Notwithstanding the earnest appeal made to us to close this debate as speedily as possible, I feel unable to comply, because, while I admit Her Majesty's Government have a duty to discharge towards the country, we also have a duty to discharge towards the people who sent us here; and, in the name of the people, I desire to register my solemn and emphatic protest against the demands of Her Majesty's Government. Three different proposals the Government have made, against which, I hope, we shall record, if not a numerous, a serious protest. First, they propose a considerable addition to the number of men to be engaged in fighting; secondly, they ask us to sanction an expenditure of £6,000,000 over that of last year; and, thirdly, we are asked to sanction a scheme the Government, with the assistance of experts, have prepared for the defence of the Metropolis. Well, I am amazed that any body of reasonable men, in or out of this House, should have had the temerity to make such propositions, and especially the latter; and in no speech yet delivered do I find any justification for it. I remember, some three or four years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) was Chancellor of the Exchequer he deplored the great increase of expenditure on the Services, and used strong language—not stronger than was warranted by the facts; he said the expenditure upon the Services was every year increasing "by leaps and bounds," and that, if economy and retrenchment was to be effected, it must be in this direction. But no retrenchment has been effected, though I remember a strong appeal was made to us below the Gangway to assist the Government in what I believe was their determination to effect retrenchment. Then, during last Session, we had two very common-sense speeches from the Treasury Bench on the subject. First, the Secretary for War stood up and disposed altogether of a scare in regard to an invasion by some imaginary foe. Following him we had the First Lord of the Admiralty, who, in a common-sense manner, effectually disposed of the dangers from a naval invasion. With these two speeches some of us hoped that the bogey of invasion by some imaginary foe from some imaginary part of the globe was disposed of; and at least, I think, we are justified in asking—as in all sincerity I do ask—what has

occurred since these two speeches were delivered in the House some six months ago to cause such a complete change of front on the part of Her Majesty's Government? If there was no danger to be apprehended at that time, we are justified in asking—nay, more, we are justified in demanding—in the name of the industrial millions of this country, some proof that some incident has since occurred to warrant us in voting this increase in expenditure. What I want to know is, where is the enemy? Where is the danger? Where is the foe? If there is no danger, we are not to be frightened out of our propriety by the bogey of invasion, which is continually trotted out to extract money from the pockets of the toiling millions of this country. Last night we witnessed a sparring match between the Front Opposition Bench and Her Majesty's Opposition. It is very curious how those who sit on the Front Bench, opposite to those who are in office, consider it absolutely necessary to criticize severely the financial proposals of the Government. When out of office, right hon. Gentlemen feel it their duty to pose as economists; but we all know that in the end, when the sparring is over, the gentlemen who criticize the proposals of the Government will say that, after all, the moment is not opportune for the retrenchment they are desirous of effecting, and under the circumstances they feel it their duty to support the Government. That is exactly what happened in the farce which was enacted last night, and how the Secretary for War managed to pump up so much excitement and pitch into the right hon. Member for Stirling (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) so strongly is a mystery to me. I have been long enough in this House not to believe in these naval and military manœuvres of right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Benches opposite. It would be far better if they would tell us what the remedies are for the evils which they profess to deplore. One hon. and gallant Member was good enough to tell us that we want a great increase in the Horse Artillery; another that steps should be taken to improve the breed of horses; another advocated a more efficient Cavalry Service; another said "strengthen the Infantry," while some advocated long service and others short service. All these nostrums have been put forward and the same speeches delivered over and over again, and when the Government bring forward the Estimates next year, they would save the time of the House by reprinting the debates which have taken place in former years. But we have another class of Members who declare that all the previous doctors have been wrong, and that what we need is a complete system for the fortification of our coast. I would, however, ask whether it is not desirable, before we commence new fortifications, that we should supply those which have already been constructed with guns? Forts have been constructed at enormous cost at Plymouth, Portsmouth, and other naval stations, upon which no guns have been mounted, and I think it would be sheer folly and waste to repeat these blunders. I am prepared to register my vote against the proposals of the Government, because I believe that instead of diminishing danger they are calculated to increase it. My theory is that the danger becomes the greater with every increase of the Army and Navy; because if the nation is prepared to fight, and you are satisfied that all branches of the Service are in a perfect state of efficiency, you are much more likely to engage in a struggle with a Foreign Power than if you had a weak Army and an ineffective Navy. A few years ago there was a remarkable scare which I have before referred to in reference to Pendjeh, and a Vote of £11,000,000 was rushed through this House to prevent Russia from taking a piece of territory which was said to belong to our Ally, the Ameer of Afghanistan. But the money was never applied in that direction. Nobody knows to this day what became of it, because a few weeks afterwards the alarmists discovered that our Army was not large enough to cope with that of Russia, and there was a danger that if we engaged in a struggle we might be defeated. They, therefore, climbed down from their lofty pedestal and proposed to refer the matter to arbitration. Russia readily consented; but the matter never came to arbitration at all; because the Commissioners appointed by both Powers to delimitate the frontier line found that the so-

called valuable territory was a mere slip of sandy desert not worth half-a-crown, and that, after all, it really belonged to Russia. The moral of that story is that we did not engage in a struggle with Russia because the experts discovered that our Army was not strong enough for the purpose. Had our forces been sufficient, the alarmists would undoubtedly have provoked a war with Russia for a valueless strip of sandy desert. I come now to the last proposal of the Government—namely, the defence of London. I am told that Her Majesty's Government simply propose that a number of sites shall be purchased, that no forts shall be erected upon them, but that the land shall simply be acquired so that it may be available in the event of an invasion. What will happen? The land will, I presume, be acquired. I am told it is intended that earthworks shall be at once erected. Even suppose that they are not, as soon as the land has been acquired a flagstaff will be erected, and the British flag will fly above it. By-and-bye there will be earthworks and buildings, and ultimately money will be expended in the erection of fortifications, which will remain as monuments of the folly of this House. Scores of similar monuments exist throughout the country. It is because I do not believe that the danger would be diminished, but greatly increased, if the men and money asked for by the Government were supplied, because I believe that there is no Power in the world who desires to invade us, and because I am not to be frightened by the spectre of invasion I decline to vote for the proposals of the Government.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): I feel under the necessity of moving that the Question be now put.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Question be now put."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes 221; Noes 101.—(Div. List, No. 14.)

Question put accordingly,

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 149,667, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 92; Noes 230.—(Div. List, No. 15.)

*MR. W. H. SMITH claimed "That the Original Question be now put."

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 231; Noes 88.—(Div. List, No. 16.)

(2.) £5,004,500, Pay and Allowances.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I venture to make an appeal to the Committee to allow this Vote to be taken at once. As a matter of ordinary practice, this is done; for it is the natural consequence of the decision we have just taken. We have had a full discussion, extending over two days, of the policy in which the two Votes are concerned; and, having in mind those statutory obligations to which I previously referred, I trust the Vote will now be taken.

*MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I desire, at any rate, to say a word of protest against this procedure. I care not what has been the practice on former occasions; it is quite enough for us that the circumstances of the day are altogether unusual. Whether or not it is any use insisting upon debate and Division I do not know, and it is a point I do not now wish to argue; but I do propose to say this, that the circsmstances under which the Government are asking us for money are absolutely unprecedented. The Government are a discredited and disgraced faction, and they know that they appear in the face of the country and public opinion with halters round their necks. Under the circumstances, I, for one, am not disposed without protest to give them any facilities for obtaining one farthing of public money; and, if there were the slightest possibility of doing it, I would offer every possible obstacle in the way of their obtaining any money at all for the Public Services. [*Sensation.*] Hon. Members appreciate the position, I am glad to see, in which they are placed. The people are well aware of it, and if you went to the country to-morrow you know you would be routed. Another reason why I think it is our duty to

offer a protest against the Vote is that you are asking for an unusual number of men, more than is absolutely necessary. I will not argue that question, but I object to any more burdens being imposed on the taxpayers of the country for two very sufficient reasons. One is that the taxpayers are already overburdened by the wholly unnecessary expenditure incurred by your degrading, disgraceful policy of Coercion in Ireland; and, secondly, if you were not so fatuously wedded to that disgraceful method of government, you might withdraw the 30,000 bayonets with which you now hold Ireland down, and have an ample force for the legitimate service of the country. I would add, in addition to that, it is, to my mind, sufficiently unsatisfactory that we should be abused for spending three and a half hours in discussing what is quite as important a question as the condition of Ireland—namely, the question of the condition of the industrial classes—while no objection is made to wasting two whole days on the question of adding to the taxation of these poor people for the purpose of increasing our already bloated armaments.

MR. PICTON (Leicester): On this subject, again, something might be said as to the Staff of Generals. I may say that it is because, and only because, of the undertaking given by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, that I shall abstain from moving a reduction to this Vote. I must say that I have it on the highest authority—that of Lord Wolseley and Major-General Brackenbury—that we have at least 100 Generals too many on the Effective List, and I do not think we ought to allow it to be supposed that we let a scandal of this kind pass without protest, unless on the ground that we have it from the Government that they intend to introduce a reform in this Department. It is only on that ground that I refrain from moving a reduction.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exeeeding £57,200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Pay and Miscellaneous Expenses of the Chaplain's Department, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890."

Mr. Conybeare

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, South): I must protest against this Vote being taken at such an hour.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

CIVIL SERVICE AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1888-9.

Class III.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £200, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1, 1889, for certain expenses of the Law Agents in Scotland for Government Departments."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I would appeal to hon. Members to make progress with the Vote, even although only a few minutes remain.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): It is perfectly idle to begin a discussion, when only 10 minutes remain, upon a question which involves a very grave Constitutional matter.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I will not resist hon. Members from Scotland, but they must be aware that there is a date beyond which it will be impossible for the Government to take Supply in compliance with the law; and, therefore, if the Committee of Supply is not likely to be closed before that date, the Government will be compelled to ask further privileges from the House at the expense of the rights and privileges of private Members.

Question put, and agreed to.

Progress reported.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the Committee of Public Accounts have power to send for persons, papers, and records.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at five minutes after Nine o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 15.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 21.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 13th March, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

—o—

FARM LABOURERS AND COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether he was correctly reported by *Hansard* to have said, on July 26, 1888—

"That agricultural labourers hired by the year and occupying houses on the farms on which they were employed (the occupation of such houses being part of their wages) would be entitled to vote for Members of the County Council;"

whether his attention was, at the same time, drawn to the fact that agricultural labourers, fulfilling these conditions in Northumberland, were being excluded from the Register; and, whether he had yet made the inquiries which he promised on that occasion?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's in the East): The answer cited by the hon. Gentleman seems to have been abbreviated. I have referred to my manuscript, and I find that in my own handwriting this is the answer which I was to have given, and which I believe I did give—

"If a labourer is not required to reside for the purposes of his service, but merely has a cottage as part of his wages, he would, in my opinion, be entitled to be registered as a voter under the County Electors Act."

I am not authorized to decide questions of law, and the answer I gave was based upon a decision of the High Court in a case of a somewhat similar nature. From inquiries I made I understood that there had been a considerable number of complaints on the part of those who considered themselves entitled to the franchise in Northumberland, but, so far as I know, the complaint has been almost entirely confined to that county. If that be so, it may be assumed that the persons referred to by the hon. Gentleman who have not been put upon the register in Northumberland have elsewhere been placed upon the register. However this may be, Parliament has set up machinery by which the question can be authoritatively decided. Any person claiming to be put upon the register whose claim is refused by the revising barrister may appeal to the High Court against his decision. I do not understand that this course has been pursued with reference to the cases referred to, but the question can, of course, be raised in the proper form in connexion with the next revision.

MR. FENWICK: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that also in the county of Durham the miners have been left off the register for similar reasons? Is it not the fact that this matter was brought to his notice on the 26th of July last, and did he not then make a promise to me that he would inquire into the circumstances?

*MR. RITCHIE: I certainly said I would inquire, and I have inquired, and I find there were great many complaints in Northumberland. Durham was not in my mind—I have had very short notice of the Question—but I accept the hon. Member's assurance that complaints of a similar character have been made in Durham. I would, however, point out that when the complaint was made on the 26th of July it

was too late to take any steps by anybody, even by those who had a right to take steps. The Local Government Board have no right to take steps, and no *locus standi* in the matter. The proper mode of proceeding is for the question to be raised in the High Court of Justice by those who have been refused votes, and for an authoritative decision to be thus arrived at. It is, of course, too late to admit any fresh persons, so far as voting for the existing County Council is concerned, but before the next election to the Council there will be two or three opportunities of raising the question, and I sincerely hope the course I have indicated will be followed.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, considering the great expense of raising a question of this sort in the High Court, he might not in the Bill he is going to introduce amending the Local Government Act of last Session insert a clause which would settle this question?

*MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir; I think it would be almost impossible to draw any Act of Parliament upon such a subject as to which differences might not arise. As I have pointed out, so far as the great bulk of the constituencies are concerned no complaints have arisen, and the fact that one revising barrister in one or another county seems to have interpreted the law in a different way from all the rest of revising barristers does not appear to me to necessitate the Government introducing a Bill, which in any case must be an extremely difficult Bill, if it is proposed to define accurately what is the existing state of the law. I therefore hope the proper course will be employed, and, looking to the important questions which arise, as well as to the large number of those interested in the matter, I do not think the question of expense ought to be one which should raise any difficulty in the matter.

*MR. CHILDERS: I did not suggest the introduction of a Bill, but of a clause in the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman is going to bring forward.

*MR. RITCHIE: Yes; but I do not propose to bring in any Bill amending the County Electors Act. The question arises under that Act, and it would necessitate a new Bill.

Mr. Ritchie

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PRISONERS (IRELAND) BILL.

[BILL 2.]

SECOND READING.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I observe, Sir, in to-day's paper that the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) has given notice of opposition to this Bill. He has done so, I presume, because he considers it inexpedient to legislate for a particular class without taking into account another class of people of a character not usually associated with crime. If the hon. Member will embody that view in a Bill, I promise him all the support in my power, and also the support of hon. Members below the Gangway. But I am entitled, taking all the circumstances into account, to suspect the perfect character of the philanthropy of the hon. Member, especially when I know that lately in Ireland he has passed coldly by the door of the evicted tenant and shed crocodile tears at the woes of the policemen whose barracks have not been whitewashed outside by the Marquess of Clanricarde. My Bill, I admit, is not a very comprehensive one. I do not propose to deal with the general matters the hon. Member refers to, nor to many other matters besides. I do not propose to deal with the very serious crimes of high treason and treason felony. I prefer to leave that subject to abler hands, so that all offences which have the general good of mankind as their motive may be distinguished from other crimes against social order which are at variance with the well-being and established usages of society. My object is simply to effect a change in a law which is now in operation in Ireland, or rather to effect a change in the penal clauses of that measure. It is a law under which no less than 3,000 men and women have suffered up to the present moment. With regard to the number of victims there is a dearth of information at the present moment, because, notwithstanding all the pressure that has been put upon the Chief Secretary, we have failed to elicit any definite information as to the number who have been imprisoned since last Whitsuntide. Under this law the Government hold that

all are equally criminal. That is a proposition which we dispute. Generally speaking, it is an outrage upon common sense to say that in agitations where the passions of men are aroused there are not offences committed, which are of a different character, class, and degree. It is absurd to say that a man who denounces a public evil is equally guilty with a man who commits a crime in order to avenge a private wrong. In the past history of England men have suffered for having taken part in agitations against existing laws—laws which have since been abrogated by other laws which have became the bulwark of the British Constitution. In Ireland there are men who have offended against the Criminal Law and Procedure Act, who are not esteemed to be criminals by the people of the country. Who will say that Father Kennedy is a criminal? Father Kennedy left his prison cell but a few days ago to receive the enthusiastic ovations of his parishioners, and to be presented by the Town Council of Cork with the freedom of the city. Who will say that John Mandeville was a criminal for having delivered a speech in which he denounced the perpetration of crime, and for which he has since been justified by the success of the cause for which he was pleading? Sir, the public conscience revolts against the proposition. The high tide of publicopinion is swelling against it. Even the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and of the Conservative Government have declared against the Penal Clauses of this Act. I need only allude to a statement made outside this House by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), and to the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) in this House a short time ago, to show the view taken of the hardships which many persons are suffering in consequence of the operation of this Act. But it is not only the feelings of the supporters of the Government within this House which are outraged by the operation of the Act. Even the supporters of the Government in Ireland are becoming tired of it and of the manner in which it is administered. Let me for the information of the Chief Secretary quote the opinion of one of his chief supporters in Ireland. He knows very well that the *Irish Times* is a newspaper which supports the Government and its policy. The hon. Member for South Tyrone knows that also. Yet what does the proprietor of the newspaper say in a letter to the editor? He says—

"We all know that a degrading system of punishment may exasperate, but it will never mitigate or alter a man's political conduct. The time has arrived when such prisoners should be treated as first-class misdemeanants."

This, Sir, is the opinion of one of the supporters of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland; and I think that the sooner the Government recognize the change of feeling the better for themselves. My contention here to-day is that the penal clauses of the Coercion Act now in operation in Ireland establish a principle which is of a retrograde character. In times past—and the further back I go, the better I am able to prove my contention—prisoners who were indicted for offences that had even the slightest tinge of a political complexion were treated with respect and consideration. If we compare the charges made now against those which were made in times past, the presumption is largely in favour of those who are suffering in Ireland at the present moment. The charges now made are so thin that they have to be couched in the vaguest and most general language—such, for instance, as I have had personal experience of, where men have been charged and condemned because they compelled or induced persons unknown not to take farms unknown, the property of landlords unknown, that might become vacant at some future time—not stated, because unknown. That is one of the favourite charges of the present day, and it is a charge for which I myself received four months' imprisonment. Let me compare that charge with the charges made against Irishmen 40 or 50 years ago, and then compare the treatment of the two classes of prisoners. Take, for instance, the charge against Mr. O'Connell and his associates. They were accused of a foul conspiracy in having seditiously combined to commit offences by violent means, involving, as they did, incitement, intimidation and terror. I am sure the Chief Secretary and the Law Officers of the Crown will agree with me that that was a very heinous offence. It was the charge

made against Mr. O'Connell, and in the eye of the law it was an offence of the blackest and deepest kind. The offenders were convicted and condemned to a term of imprisonment; but how were they treated? The governor of the gaol was ordered to let his house to them so that they should be comfortable; they had their own servants; they saw their families daily; they had horses to ride even in prison; they pursued their ordinary avocations; they held *levées* of their friends, and the only restriction placed on them was that they were not allowed to receive political deputations. If this was the treatment of prisoners convicted under such a terrible charge, how much more lenient, in justice or fair play, ought to be the treatment meted out to the persons who are now convicted in Ireland of such petty offences as boycotting and the publication of meetings of suppressed branches of the National League? If some unfortunate man is overheard by a policeman in a crowd cheering the mention of the name of a popular patriot, he is a criminal under this Act. Let me put to the House another case—I mean the case against John Mitchel. The charge against him was that—

"Moved and instigated by the Devil he and his associates conspired to bring about an insurrection against our Sovereign Lady the Queen, and to put her to death."

Of that charge John Mitchel was convicted. But when John Mitchel was taken to Spike Island he was allowed to wear his own clothes, and when the governor brought him another suit he was reproved by the Castle, and actually apologized to his prisoner for having asked him to put prison clothes on. And how was John Mitchel treated in Spike Island? He remained in a separate cell and court, had books lent to him by the governor to read; he drew his chair to the door and spent his hours in the sun reading "The Merry Wives of Windsor." On one occasion he relates that Grace, the governor, waited upon him with one of the turnkeys with a suit of brown prison clothes. The governor said he had an unpleasant duty to perform, but Mr. Mitchel must put on the prison suit. The prisoner obeyed; but the blunder was soon rectified by Dublin Castle, and a letter was sent to the governor directing him to treat his prisoner in a different manner from other convicts, and to allow him to wear his own clothes. Yet this man was convicted of having been instigated by the Devil to take the life of the Queen. Contrast that treatment with that which William O'Brien has received for making a speech in which he asked his hearers to avoid the commission of crime as they would poison. Mr. O'Brien was cast into a prison cell, compelled to herd with the vilest of criminals, told that he must wear the garb of crime and do menial work. Here are two men with motives exactly the same—one of whom is treated as a gentleman, while the other is assaulted, degraded, and subjected to treatment worthy only of the chamber of horrors. I have said that the clauses of the Criminal Law and Procedure Act are a retrograde step. I may be told by the hon. Member for South Tyrone that the Fenian prisoners were treated exactly as other convicts. That is so, but the greater the shame and disgrace to this country. But let me ask, if there were Fenian convicts now, whether they would be treated as they were formerly? The Devon Commission, in 1877, recommended the setting apart from time to time of a detached convict prison for prisoners of this class, and they commended the subject to the consideration of Her Majesty. The Commission which sat in the following year 1878-9 said—

"Looking at the inconvenience which has arisen in practice from the association of such persons with other convicts, we concur in this recommendation."

Will this Government then—even the Government of the present day—dare, after the recommendation of these two Commissions, to treat treason felony convicts in the same manner as the convicts of 1865-7 were treated? I venture to assert that they will not dare to do so. And now let me draw a picture of the different treatment meted to a man who was tried in Ireland in 1865. It was a political charge, and he was sentenced to a life long imprisonment. While in prison he was treated with harshness, cruelty, and barbarity. He was flogged; chained with hands behind his back; compelled to grovel on his stomach and lap up his food like a dog. Where is he to-day? He is in a foreign land, plotting, by means which do not recommend themselves to us, the destruction of the

British Empire. I allude to O'Donovan Rossa. In 1867 there was a man condemned for a political offence to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. His sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. Where is he to-day? He sits on these benches, loyally aiding and assisting the House of Commons to make better laws for the government of Her Majesty's subjects. Will the Chief Secretary take the lesson to heart and act accordingly? I will endeavour, if I can, to diagnose the position of the Government and the mind of the Chief Secretary. He has before him the two great failures of two Coercion Acts—the failure of Mr. Forster's and his own Coercion Acts. He thinks that Mr. Forster failed because his imprisonment was of a lenient character, and he has come to the conclusion that if the treatment meted out to prisoners in Ireland is of a different character, he will break down the national movement. He thinks the fire has been extinguished, but the smouldering ashes fanned into flame are brighter than before to give light and heat to struggling Ireland. I can quite conceive that the right hon. Gentleman is under the impression that he might conquer, and consequently he decided to apply the old remedy—a remedy which has been tried over and over again, and which has failed as often as it has been tried. The right hon. Gentleman has even confessed it, for in his famous conversation with Mr. Blunt, he said that if he put in prison a few weak men like Mr. Dillon and Mr. W. O'Brien the movement would collapse. But he has underrated the people with whom he has to deal. The long bead-roll of Irish martyrs tells the tale. The long bead-roll of persons who have gone to the gallows and the prison cells and convict ships belies the hope. What are the results of the operation of this Act? It has been in operation now for two years, and, as I said before, we have had no information since Whitsuntide of the paper which has been asked for by the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Morley); no paper has been furnished.

An hon. MEMBER: It is being printed.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: At any rate, we have not got it before us on the present occasion. The last paper, furnished at Whitsuntide, gave 1,558 cases, 14 only of which were reversed on appeal. In the autumn the Chief Secretary said the gaols were empty. He went to Ireland on Christmas Eve, and what has he been doing since? He has been engaged in Dublin Castle in signing warrants for the arrest of Members of this House and other people throughout the length and breadth of the land.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Then somebody has signed them for the right hon. Gentleman. My contention is that the only justification for severity is wanting. Like the Governor of Warsaw who said, "order reigns," the right hon. Gentleman says, "peace and order reign." In this case he has altogether failed to inspire terror. There are cases in Ireland where a man has been in prison three or four times in succession. In the district of Kanturk there is scarcely a respectable man who has not been in prison three or four times. And I see that only yesterday a man was waited upon in prison in order to enable a settlement to be made with a landlord in regard to his property. The Woodford men have all been in prison more than once. The right hon. Gentleman has failed to deter the Irish Members from doing their duty to their constituents. Mr. William O'Brien is not bowed down by the weight of his sentence. Mr. Dillon came out of prison an unrepentant sinner. Mr. Sheehy and Mr. Cox have been undeterred by four sentences. I have had three; Mr. Dillon two; Mr. Finucane two. There have been 23 Members altogether, and, when the right hon. Gentleman has done with those 23, he can have 23 more, and he is perfectly welcome to them. Let him go on for 20 years with his resolute government, and as long as he remains at his present post he will have Irishmen to put in prison, be the penalty heavy or light. I do not pretend to give a learned account of the present Bill. It deals with such clauses in the existing Act as relate to the right of public meeting, the suppression of branches of the National League, and the holding of meetings in suppressed districts. Those clauses of the Act were evidently drawn with a determined elasticity. They were drawn by a careful hand, and they have been interpreted

by magistrates, who have been laughed at by the Judges for their ignorance, and whose only qualification for administering the Act is that they will readily obey the orders of Dublin Castle. We want to alter that state of things; and it is for that purpose that I propose my Bill. My contention that it needs alteration is borne out by the Government themselves. They prosecuted the Lord Mayor of Dublin for a publication in his newspaper; they prosecuted Alderman Hooper, until recently a Member of this House, for publishing information in a newspaper. They abandoned those prosecutions. Even the little boys in the street have defeated the Government in this respect. The hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington) has received six months' imprisonment, with hard labour, for the publication of a speech, and his punishment was so little deserved that the magistrates who sentenced him offered to set him free if he would only promise not to offend again. Surely his crime could not have been of a very glaring character. Will any hon. Member say that a man is a criminal because he sold a copy of *United Ireland*, or that another is a felon because he cried out, "Three cheers for William O'Brien?" Most of the acts which have been called crimes, and which have been punished as crimes, are simply political in their character. I do not ask the House to accept my statement, but I will refer them to a Judgment delivered by County Court Judge Morris in the case of the hon. Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly). In the course of a long Judgment, he said that his views had been talked about, but he did not care what was said because when he made up his mind upon a certain course he took it. When he was dealing with an offence which did not involve anything like moral guilt, and there was no gross infraction of the law, he thought the clemency of the law should be extended. When, however, it involved moral turpitude and led to serious consequences it was impossible to extend the mercy of the Court. He said, further, that in the particular case with which he was dealing, he was not doing wrong in straining the quality of mercy. He considered the sentence passed upon Mr. O'Kelly to be altogether too much, and he reduced the sentence of four months' imprisonment to one of two months as a first-class misdemeanant. In another case a Judge in Dublin refused to endorse a sentence upon the hon. Member for Dublin. The case was carried to a higher tribunal, and, obeying the order of the Superior Court, the Judge gave a reduced sentence, and ordered the hon. Member to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. Some people attempt to make out that the treatment of a prisoner in the gaols of Ireland is not of a severe character. If that be so, how does it come to pass that men have lost their lives in prison, and that men undergoing periods of imprisonment have been reduced in weight to an alarming extent? Mr. Sweeney, in the course of a three months' imprisonment, lost two stone in weight, and an hon. Friend of mine in 15 days lost 11 lbs. in weight. I am sure that hon. Members will not have forgotten the terrible case of the man Larkin, who died in prison. Take the case of Larkin, who was seized with an illness for which he was treated medically on September 23. At six o'clock on the evening of the 26th he was locked up in his ordinary cell, not in the infirmary, so that not only could the prisoner not get out, but the warders could not get in. A warder saw him at 2 a.m. rinsing his mouth with some water, and told him to go to sleep. At 2.30 he again saw him and he then appeared to be asleep. When the warder next entered the cell he found the prisoner dead, and the governor said he was dead. After the inquest the father and six others who had known the deceased all his life signed a declaration that they could not recognize in the emaciated remains the stalwart youth who yet had not been dead 36 hours. Now attempts have been made to prove that the treatment of prisoners in Ireland is not of a harsh or severe character. I hold that the treatment of prisoners in Ireland is not only degrading, but of a severe physical character, and I ask, why all this cruelty? Can it be because the right hon. Gentleman is of a naturally cruel disposition, or because the Government desire to get back to those refined systems of torture for political opponents which have taken the place of the rack and the thumbscrew? Let it not be supposed for a moment

that we ask for ourselves anything that we are not anxious to secure for the humblest man in Ireland. I appeal to the Government to accept my Bill and abandon the cruel system that is already responsible for the blood of Mandeville and of Larkin, and I ask the House to take my Bill and make of it a golden bridge over which they can retreat from a position of dishonour and disgrace.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I beg to support the Second Reading of this Bill. I should not have intruded myself at this early moment on the House, except that I am obliged to leave early. I desire to submit some considerations bearing upon this measure. Now, why have we a Bill upon this question at all? I do not think the Government can hide from themselves the fact that there is a strong feeling, not confined at all to Home Rulers, upon the subject of the treatment of this particular class of prisoners. I believe it exists among Members on the other side, and among people who are not strongly actuated by political sentiments. They feel uneasy at seeing men, who in the ordinary vulgar sense they know do not belong to the criminal classes, being treated in the manner which has been described; above all, they feel that these men are being treated in this manner under an exceptional law for doing acts which can be done in England with absolute impunity. The combination of these two things produces, unquestionably, a very uneasy effect upon the public mind. I am fully aware of the extreme difficulty of defining exceptional offences under a Statute. But we ought not to have that difficulty before it. The real truth is that the difficulty ought to have been made impossible by reasonable administration. I wish to refrain from any bitter tone of political recrimination; but there are many things in the criminal law which are dealt with by administration, and not by legislation. Take, for instance, the case of infanticide. It is murder of the worst description, and is punishable by the law of England by death. If one chooses to chop logic as the Irish Secretary chops logic, it may be said that if the law shows any lenity towards a crime of that description it will encourage the seducer and the mother to commit this foul offence, and that, therefore, the law must be carried out and the mother executed. Yet for the last 30 or 40 years it has become a principle of administration that the capital sentence is not carried out in these cases. Now, here is an instance in which by administration the responsible Minister of the Crown, by a settled system, has altered the punishment in a particular case. In order that we may not be deceived on a question of this kind by the fallacies in the logic of the right hon. Gentleman, hon. Members will mark this—that if it were another woman, and not the mother who murdered the same child, that woman would be executed as a woman was executed a day or two ago. Why do we execute one woman and not execute another? Why, on account of the circumstances and the motives which lead to the act; and, therefore, when we are told that the circumstances and motives cannot be taken into consideration, we are met by the contradiction of the whole system of criminal jurisdiction. I will take another illustration on a lower scale. By the law of England children of tender age are held just as responsible for their actions as adults. I remember the time when our prisons were full of young criminals. That was not altered by legislation. I had carefully to consider the question. It was difficult to define what were the offences for which children should be sent to prison, and at what age they should not be sent to prison, but the whole system was altered by a single act of administration—by discharging those little children from prison in large numbers. There was great objection taken at the time. I was said to be tampering with the law of England, but when the matter came to be considered, the magistrates themselves saw imprisonment was not the best way to deal with offences of that kind, and the whole thing came to an end through the action of the magistrates and through the action of the Administration. Then, again, the House will remember the terrible case where some famished sailors on a wreck killed and ate a boy. Do you mean to

tell me that by the act of the Administration they made no difference in a case of that kind as compared with another murder, owing to the surrounding circumstances and motives which led to the terrible act? I maintain these things have been done, and can be done, by Administration, and the result is that a reasonable Administration should have the will to act in accordance with the sound feelings of the people they represent. The present Administration say "We can do nothing." The Home Secretary says "I have no authority: I do what the medical officers say." There were times when the Secretary of State was the master, and not the servant, of his subordinates. If the right hon. Gentleman will send out a circular, calling attention to the fact that there is such a person as the Secretary of State, there will soon be a very different condition of things. The Irish Secretary says he cannot do anything, that the prisons are not in his Department; and the Home Secretary says the prisons were not in his Department, or, at all events, he is a *roi fainéant* of that Department. I remember a time when the Secretary of State was in every detail, medical or disciplinary, the prison authority, not nominally, but really responsible, and there was not a week, there was hardly a day, that I did not go—I will not say into details, but into prison administration. But now we are told that the prisons are not in the Department of the Home Secretary. At all events, that right hon. Gentleman sat by the Irish Secretary the other day when he said that the Irish prisons were in the same position as the English prisons. If the Chief Secretary in Ireland and the Home Secretary in England had taken the part which, if they had the will, they have the power to take, this difficulty need never have arisen. Then there is another body by whom these things might have been modified, and that is the Magistracy. In the earliest days of the administration of this Act proceedings were taken against the late Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. Sullivan), one of the most respected men in Ireland—a man as much respected as any in this House—for publishing reports of a meeting of a suppressed branch of the National League in his paper. He came not before a Resident Magistrate, but before Mr. O'Donel, the Stipendiary of Dublin, and that gentleman took a perfectly reasonable view of the subject. He felt that it would be a shock to the common sense of mankind to treat Mr. Sullivan as a common malefactor, and he declined to do so. He used a most sensible argument, that if the offence were sedition the accused would be treated as a first-class misdemeanant, and he said he would deal with the charge as if it were of the same character, and sentence Mr. Sullivan to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. If that example had been followed we should not have been landed in the present difficulty. The same view was taken by several of the County Court Judges. Then we come to the Resident Magistrates. Why was Mr. Harrington, who was charged with an exactly similar offence, treated in a different manner from Mr. Sullivan? Right hon. Gentlemen talk of the equality of our law. There is no such equality. The administration of the law in respect of these sentences depends on the man before whom the offender is brought. If a man is brought before Mr. O'Donel he is treated in a sensible way; if before Mr. Cecil Roche he is treated very differently. The Chief Secretary tells us he has nothing to do with it; but it was immediately after this moderate sentence passed upon Mr. Sullivan that the Chief Secretary made a series of speeches which were thoroughly understood by his Resident Magistrates. The truth is that the Irish Removable Magistrates are very much like the collie dogs of Scotland; they do not want any particular word said to them; they know the eye of the master; they know very well what particular sheep to bring up. That is the reason why this harsh and brutal treatment, condemned at first by the common sense of the magistracy, was introduced. We can not rely upon the Administration, because they do not apply reasonable principles of justice in consideration of the surrounding circumstances; we cannot rely upon the moderation of the magistracy, because the Chief Secretary has taken very good care of that. Then, can we rely upon the medical officers? Whenever any particular cases of hardship are brought forward, the Chief Secretary says: "The prisoner will get what the medical officer recommends."

If that were merely a shabby pretext of the right hon. Gentleman's for escaping from his own responsibility, so long as it had the desired result, I would be satisfied. The Home Secretary, no doubt unintentionally, entirely misrepresented the facts in the case of Mr. Davitt which I recently brought forward, and said that what was done was done on the representation of the medical officer. That is not the case. There are things which are not within the competency of the medical officer. It is not the medical officer who recommends who is to visit the prisoner, or what books he is to have or not. It was not the medical officer who instructed me, but I who instructed the medical officer. If the Home Secretary and the Chief Secretary for Ireland choose to regard themselves as the subservient instruments of their medical officers, I have no objection. But if the question is whether the medical officers are reliable guides to the Home Secretary and the Secretary for Ireland, that is quite another thing. There is no one who has more respect for the medical profession than I have; no men do more for the poor than medical men; but there is no department which requires more constant supervision than the medical department, especially where the medical officers have private practice. I remember a very painful case in which a prisoner was allowed to die of hunger and cold, and then the principle was laid down as to the removal of a woman from prison before her delivery, and that in cases of incurable diseases persons were not to be allowed to die in prison. The prison is neither an hospital nor a mortuary. The prison administration in Ireland is one in which I have very little confidence. At the time it was proposed by Lord Spencer to remove some prisoners to England, I had to express myself on the nature and quality of the prison treatment in Ireland. It was in such a condition that it was absolutely necessary to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. I do not desire to say anything against, on the contrary, I wish to say a great deal in favour of, the medical officers of prisons in England and in Ireland whom I know. But in all professions there are black sheep, and one may come across such men as Dr. Barr. I asked yesterday a question as to a letter of Dr. Barr's on prison treatment, and I must say a more disgraceful composition I never read in my life. I cannot conceive how any man in authority can allow such a person to remain for a day in charge of any of Her Majesty's prisons. Dr. Barr's language is not only characterized by most violent and bitter animosity, but it is a bad imitation of the style of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Dr. Barr denounces the Royal Commission which sat on Irish prisons on account of its lenity in recommending milk to Irish prisoners. He says, "The recommendation of the Commission to add to the diet such a highly-refined animal product as milk was not in conformity with the evidence before them, which went to show that quantity rather than quality was best suited for an Irishman's stomach." That is the language of the medical officer sent over by the Home Secretary to aid the Irish Secretary in the case of Mr. Mandeville. It has been said that Dr. Barr forced Dr. Ridley against his will into a severity that was contrary to the sentiment of that gentleman; and, having read Dr. Barr's letter, I feel convinced that it was so: for a letter of greater brutality of sentiment, as well as of violent political prepossession, I have never read. We cannot rely entirely on medical officers to deal with this question, and, therefore, we must appeal to Parliament itself. That is the reason why we must have a Bill. It is said it is difficult to define political offences; but we find no difficulty in defining them in the Prisons Act, which provides that every prisoner convicted of sedition, or of a seditious libel, shall be treated as a first class misdemeanant. Sedition has often led to bloodshed. The argument may be used that the man who incites to crime is worse than the man who commits it. "Hear, hear!" Was the hon. Member who cheers a Member of Parliament in 1887? If so, will he say why are persons convicted of seditious libel to be treated as first-class misdemeanants? Do they not incite? A seditious libel is, in itself, an incitement. It may be an incitement to treason, rebellion, or civil war. Therefore, what becomes of the argument that the man who incites must necessarily be treated as an ordinary felon? It has been asked, why should we so punish people who violate the Vaccination Act? I quite agree. It is very wrong that they should

be treated as ordinary criminals, and I am quite willing to deal with their case. But will you tell me that if a doctor writes an article against vaccination, and recommends and incites people not to have their children vaccinated, he ought to go to prison as a common felon? Therefore, the plausible arguments brought forward on the other side as magnificent truisms are in fact only silly and empty fallacies. Everybody recommends things which if a man did he might be punished for, and nobody thinks of punishing those who recommend them as if they were offenders. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) comes forward with an Amendment to defeat the Bill. If there is any severity to be exercised against an Irishman the hon. Member for South Tyrone is always there to advocate it. But if there is proposed any alleviation of the lot of those who are not his countrymen—of those who are, perhaps, not likely to be long his constituents—the hon. Member for South Tyrone comes forward to add fuel to the fire. In point of fact the hon. Member has long been the moral emergency man of evicting Irish landlords, and, therefore, is the person to place an obstacle in the way of such a measure as this. That is natural enough on his part. But the Government have had some awkward and injurious allies lately, and I warn them against the alliance of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who represents in this House the race animosities and the religious hatreds of the Orange minority in Ireland, and who is here to ask the Government to be what I am afraid they are only too willing to be—the instruments of the cruel oppression of the great majority of the Irish people. The principle of the hon. Member for South Tyrone is like that of Prince Bismarck —"*Do ut des.*" The patronage of the hon. Member must be repaid by the Government consenting to become the tools of the Orange faction in carrying out every severity against those who will not agree to their policy. For myself I do not believe that even from the point of view of the Government that is a wise and prudent course. By agreeing to the Second Reading of this Bill the House will declare that the present state of things is not satisfactory, and that a remedy ought to be found for it. I should have been glad if a remedy had been found in a reasonable and humane administration of the law. If not, there should be such a declaration in this case as we have made in the Prisons' Act on the subject of sedition, so that offences by speaking and writing shall not be treated as overt offences of gross and vulgar crime, but that some modification should be introduced into our system which will remove from the criminal administration of Ireland barbarities which, I am quite certain, are not recommended to the minds of the people of England.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby makes, in my opinion, a very bad penitent. When he appears before us in a white sheet, and with a lighted taper in his hand, he, at all events, might be a little modest, remembering his bad past. That is all I have to say in answer to the right hon. Gentleman's attack upon myself. But, Sir, in moving the Resolution which stands in my name, I desire to say that I have no intention of underrating the importance, and, in view of the public feeling excited out of doors, the gravity of this question. There are many inducements for the Government to accept the Second Reading of this Bill. By accepting it, the Chief Secretary would remove a great weight of public abuse, if not of public odium, from his own shoulders. At all events we should have no more harrowing scenes of torture in Irish prisons, no more hair-cutting episodes. But if the Bill is a wise one—and of that I am not certain—I am quite sure it does not go far enough. The House ought to look deeper than the mere question of what would be political convenience in this matter. If one feeling is stronger than another in this country, it is the feeling against class legislation. Let hon. Members conceal the fact as they like, this is a measure introduced by certain Members of Parliament, and its object is to secure a more lenient treatment for themselves—["No, no!"] — and for those who may be associated with them. Let us take the case of the four hon. Members who are either in gaol or under sentence—namely, the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), the hon. Member for

Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor), the hon. Member for Mid-Cork (Dr. Tanner), and the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington). All those gentlemen have either been sent to prison or are under sentence because of one special offence — the denunciation of land grabbing and land grabbers. [An hon. Member: We are proud of it.] There is nothing more clear than that the most lamentable results followed this denunciation, and the murder of Fitzmaurice, the murder of Forhan, the murder of Cornelius Murphy, followed directly upon those incitements.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: May I may be permitted to interrupt the hon. Gentleman. No murder or other offence followed upon the meeting.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I did not say meeting.

MR. J. O'CONNOR: Nor the speeches which had been attributed to us.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: When murder has not followed, there have been innumerable cases of outrage on man and beast. [*Cries of* "Name."] I have in my hand a list from the County of Kerry alone, of thirty-eight outrages, four of them being murders, following upon speeches denouncing land grabbing. Where outrage has not occurred, farms have been surrendered, and men have been intimidated and coerced Now, the Bill proposes that the authors of these incitements shall he treated, if they are convicted, as first class misdemeanants. Let us see how the law will then stand. Take the case of the Salvation Army. There are a great many branches of the Salvation Army in the North of Ireland, and there is one in Dublin. I am not able to concur in all the methods of that body, but looking at the sin and suffering in our midst and looking at the apathy of the great mass of the people regarding it, I am not the man to throw stones at those earnest and devoted men. Now the Salvationist preacher stands at the street corner and is arrested for obstructing the thoroughfare. He is preaching the Gospel as he knows and believes it. With him it is absolutely a matter of conscience, but he is tried and convicted. Is he a criminal in the ordinary sense? He is no more a criminal than John Bunyan was or John Wesley was, but the law sends him to gaol as an ordinary offender. You dress him in prison clothes and give him prison diet, and what is more to the purpose your Bill does not seek to bring one atom of relief to him. You leave him precisely as you find him. The Salvationist preaches the Gospel of what he considers truth and righteousness, and he is treated as an ordinary criminal, but you, forsooth, who preach the Gospel of derelict farms, are to be treated as first-class misdemeanants. I will take another case still more important, that is the case of the man who conscientiously objects to vaccinate his child. This man is actually governed by parental affection and love for his child, and yet you send him to gaol as an ordinary criminal and treat him in the ordinary way. Your Bill does not bring him one atom of relief. I repeat that this is a Bill for yourselves and not for the general public. There are other instances. There is the case of the poor man convicted at Petty Sessions and who is unable to pay the fine. These men are no more criminals than those other men. There are the men who violate the secrecy of the ballot at contested elections; they are treated as ordinary criminals. To pass this Bill would practically mean that the House of Commons makes a law for its own Members, and makes a law with a cynical indifference to the case of other men not one whit less worthy than themselves. Take the case of the Gweedore prisoners—I do not mean the men on trial with Father M'Fadden, but the men tried the other day at Fermanagh. These men under the hon. Member's Bill would be treated as ordinary criminals, because they were guilty of assault, whilst the man who went to Gweedore and originated the whole combination and superintended it would be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. I say that it is not fair, and on that ground alone I object to the Bill. Again, it is conceded that all punishment should act as a deterrent. Mr. Forster put 1,000 men in gaol. Punishment was not his object, simply detention. He turned the gaols into hydropathic establishments for these men, and food, drink, literature—everything was supplied to them. Men absolutely qualified for imprisonment, and complained that they were not imprisoned. As a matter of fact, crime

enormously increased under the Crimes Act of that time. The Act was a lamentable failure, although it was administered with the best intentions by Mr. Forster. But it failed. The present Act, however, has had a deterrent effect. Let men argue as they like, the state of Ireland to-day is vastly improved. You may tell me the improvement is due to what you call the union of hearts, but then I ask you to explain how did a similar improvement come about in Lord Spencer's time, when his Crimes Act produced a very similar result. There was no union of hearts then. I cannot possibly assent to the Second Reading of this Bill. If hon. Gentlemen feel for the Salvationists and others who are no more criminal than they pretended they are themselves, and in my opinion not nearly so much so, how comes it they have left them entirely outside the scope of their Bill? I maintain that to pass a Bill like this is to pass a piece of class legislation that the country will have no difficulty in seeing through. I am far from objecting to a re-classification of prisoners. I think it a deplorable thing that Salvationists and Anti-vaccinators should be committed to gaol and treated as ordinary criminals. To bring in a Bill with the express object of providing for Members of the House of Commons themselves—[*Cries of* "No!"]—well, it will provide for them at all events, and for the men who carry out their work in Ireland—is not a fair way in which to treat the House of Commons. If you wish to re-classify prisoners I sympathize with you; but so long as you confine your attention to one class, and a class that is producing disturbance, and outrage, and crime in Ireland, I will refuse to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill. I beg to move as an Amendment—

"That in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient to proceed with the consideration of a measure which proposes to modify the prison treatment of a certain class of prisoners in Ireland, and leaves to the ordinary law other prisoners whose offences are not of a character usually associated with crime."

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inexpedient to proceed with the consideration of a measure which proposes to modify the prison treatment of a certain class of prisoners in Ireland, and leaves to the ordinary law other prisoners whose offences are not of the character usually associated with crime."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

SIR WILLIAM T. MARRIOTT (Brighton): I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) has shown a very wise discretion (or perhaps it is the pressing nature of his engagement this evening) in leaving the House after making his onslaught upon the Chief Secretary, and not waiting for the reply. To the right hon. Gentleman I may pay this compliment, that he is one of those advocates who always spoil even the best of causes by their advocacy. On the present occasion a Bill was introduced by one of the Irish Members raising a question well worthy of the attention of this House; and I am bound to say the speech with which he introduced it was calm, moderate, and worthy of the occasion. But the late Home Secretary casts aside the Bill at once, or simply makes it a peg upon which to hang an attack upon the administration of the Chief Secretary, and makes it an occasion for demonstrating to the House what a good Home Secretary he has been, how much better than the present Home Secretary, how much better he knew his duties, how much more humane and just he had been. Well, I should be very sorry to dispel the hallucinations of the right hon. Gentleman; but, so far as I know, it is not everybody who agrees with him, or appreciates the benefit of the performance of his duties at the Home Office. Even Mr. Davitt, though one of his present allies, does not agree in all he did, and I think that we may leave the Home Secretary and Mr. Davitt to settle the quarrel between them, and that the House will proceed to consider the merits of this Bill. I am sorry myself that Mr. Davitt is not in the House at the present time, so that he might deal with the right hon. Gentleman *vivâ voce*, as he has been dealing with him by letter in the papers. The right hon. Gentleman is never famous for accuracy in his statements. He is bold, I admit; he is audacious, and makes at times astounding assertions, but accuracy has never been his strong point. When he commenced, not to support the Bill, but to attack for the

hundredth time the administration of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, he began by making a most audacious statement—saying that the acts for which Irish Members and others have been imprisoned are acts which, if they had been committed in England, would have been done with absolute impunity. ["Hear, hear!"] "Hear, hear!" says an honourable Member; but I, as a lawyer, entirely dispute and deny that statement. I say there are none of the acts—or with one exception, perhaps, under the second section of the Crimes Act—that would not be punishable equally in England as they are in Ireland. It might be by a different procedure—it might be by trial before a jury; but for the right hon. Gentleman to make the assertion that punishment was awarded for acts that in England would be committed with impunity is an audacious statement that may perhaps catch the cheers of hon. Members below the Gangway, but is absolutely opposed to facts. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned by way of illustration the crime of infanticide, and implies that in relation to this he was the best Home Secretary that ever held office; but he ought to have known, and if he knows he ought to have informed the House, what is the state of the case in relation to infanticide. It is perfectly true that the wretched mother in such cases is condemned to the extreme penalty of the law, but does not suffer it because the prerogative of the Crown intervenes. The reason for this is known very well. For many years, I will not say how many, perhaps 20 years, a strong opinion has grown and is generally maintained that there is a great distinction between different classes of murder, that it is a crime that ought to be classified, and that there is an enormous distinction between the murder of an infant by its mother under great distress of mind, and murder for gain or to gratify some brutal passion; and in all the Codes introduced into this House, or in the House of Lords, we have tried to classify such cases. It is the universal opinion that infanticide is not a crime that ought to be visited with the death sentence. But as the law stands the Judge is bound on the verdict of the jury to pronounce the capital sentence, though the Crown as a matter of invariable practice exercises the prerogative, and the wretched woman only suffers a few months' imprisonment. This is well known, and has come within the experience of every Home Secretary for the last 15 years. I will not go into the charges of harsh and brutal conduct directed against the Chief Secretary. I have not the slightest doubt that when my right hon. Friend speaks he will be able to deal with all these charges as successfully as he has on former occasions, but what I most regret about the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby is the spirit he has endeavoured to infuse into the discussion of a subject that really desires careful and serious attention. It is a question that should be discussed as much as possible free from Party animosity, and from that Party animosity the speech with which the Bill was introduced was comparatively free, but the moment the hon. Member sat down up jumped the right hon. Gentleman and endeavoured to infuse Party rancour into the whole debate. There is one point upon which I think we shall all agree, that Irish Members and others who have suffered imprisonment under the Crimes Act are not in the category of ordinary criminals. The motives of the ordinary criminal are always selfish, and generally sordid, but I do not think that anybody will impute those motives to hon. Members who have been imprisoned. We may disagree with them and think their actions are a source of danger to the country, but we know they are not actuated by selfish motives; they do these things with the view—misguided, in my opinion—that they are for the benefit of the Party and the country to which they belong. This is very different from the position of the ordinary criminal; and even if we condemn the actions we may, to a certain extent, admire the motives. Whether the Irishmen who have suffered under the Crimes Act are political offenders or not is another matter. It is very hard to define what a political offence is. In many countries political offenders suffer much worse than others sent to gaol for ordinary crimes. In Italy under the Austrian rule, and in Russia now, you will find political offenders treated with greater severity than ordinary offenders as we should call them. It is the nature of the punishment that is complained of as

degrading, though, I think, it is not the punishment but the crime which degrades a man. Speaking for myself, I can say that whatever indignities an Irish Member may have suffered in prison they would not be the cause of my regarding him with less respect; it would be the commission of the offence if anything that would influence me. As I have said, it is difficult to say what constitutes a political offence. Many people consider themselves political offenders who are nothing of the kind. The well-known Herr Most is one of such, he has suffered imprisonment in many countries and has narrated his experiences. This gentleman being in Austria somehow got to loggerheads with the authorities and was put in prison. He disliked that so much that when he was released he left Austria and went to ventilate his views in Germany under the Prussian dynasty. Again he compromised himself with the authorities and found himself inside a prison for what he considered a political offence. He found his treatment in the German prison so rigorous that when the opportunity offered he left Germany and came to enjoy the perfect freedom and liberty of England. Many hon. Members will recollect how Herr Most conducted himself in England. He took advantage of freedom and liberty of speech to such an extent, that he became an inmate of an English prison, as he thought, for a political offence. Then he discovered that prisons in the land of freedom are much worse than they are in either Austria or Germany, and so he resolves to go to democratic America where no Monarch or House of Lords checks perfect freedom. But, even in America, he at Chicago got at loggerheads with authority and was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment. At the expiration of that term he declared his opinion that in the Republic of America he found his worst, and most harsh experience of prison life. Throughout all these vicissitudes Herr Most no doubt thought himself a political prisoner, and certainly I should not think of comparing him to an ordinary criminal, though he had a longer experience of prison life than many criminals, and was a much better man than an ordinary criminal in many respects. But the question is who are we to consider political prisoners? The test must be, I think, the object they have in view in doing certain acts even when those acts are a breach of the laws in the country in which they live. Now the Bill introduced this afternoon proposes to treat all prisoners under the Crimes Act of 1885, as political prisoners. But observe there is a great distinction between the offences under the second and the seventh sections of that Act. Under the second section it is difficult to say why you should consider any of the offences as of a political character. They are divided under six heads and I will state them shortly:—1st, taking part in any criminal conspiracy now punishable by law; 2nd, wilfully and without legal authority using violence or intimidation; 3rd, taking part in any riot or unlawful assembly; 4th, taking forcible possession of lands, or houses from which anyone has been evicted; 5th, assaulting or obstructing an officer of the law; and 6th, inciting any person to commit any of the above offences. These are the six subsections of section two, and yet the right hon. Gentleman says they are acts a man can commit in England with impunity. Now try any one of these acts in England and see if you will get off with impunity. If the right hon. Gentleman is really sincere, let him put the matter to test, try any one of these acts, and see if he is not quickly lodged in one of Her Majesty's gaols. Every one of these are offences under the law in England. But when we come to section seven the pith of the section is that it deals with unlawful and dangerous associations; but these are not unlawful until they have been so proclaimed by the Lord Lieutenant. Here there is an essential distinction, and in my opinion prisoners under this section should be differently treated. But I will go farther than that, and say everyone under the six subsections may or may not be a political offender, because the crucial question in deciding what is a political offence is the object with which it was committed. I am one of those who do not quite understand the object of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Up to 1885 there was no doubt about it. Their object I find expressed in their own words—to bring about an absolute separation between England and Ireland. ["No, no!"] Yes, the object was to make Ireland a nation. If that was not so what is the meaning of the standing toast at

banquets, "Ireland a nation"? I am astonished that hon. Members should cry "No, no." Is there any meaning to be attached to the words, or to those used by the hon. Member for Cork in 1885? "To break the last link that binds us to Great Britain." Every toast, every act, every speech, and I could quote from a great many of them, indicates that meaning. Now I call that a political object. I can quite understand their wishing for a separate Government as Italy wished to separate from Austria, as Hungary at one time had the same wish, and as Poland wished to separate from Russia. I can understand that; it is a political object—it is a patriotic object—you may be the weaker country, but if you hate the rule of the country and wish to be free, I can understand that. We may not agree with you, we may do our best to prevent it, but certainly it is a political object. But you now say you do not want that; you want a Local Government Bill, a similar change in the Constitution to that we have in England. Why, if you had had even the Local Government Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian proposed, that would not have made you a nation. It would not have made you independent. You ought not to sing "Long live Ireland," or "God save Ireland." I would suggest it should be "God save the Irish Vestry." If you want Local Government, you will get it with certain reservations, and if your efforts are directed to that, then I say these offences are not political, and for this reason: You have the Constitutional means of getting what you are striving for. If you seek Local Self-Government, you have Constitutional means for that, and have no right to resort to crimes and violence. Crimes and offences accompany the fight of the weak with the strong, as in the case of Italy and Austria, and Hungary and Austria; then we must admit that crimes may be more pardonable than when committed by ordinary criminals; they are political offences arising out of the struggle when the weaker has no Constitutional means of enforcing its views on the stronger people, no Constitutional means of making its voice heard. But you have the means of making your voice heard. I do not object to the music, and you certainly are heard. You have the Constitutional means, and if you resort to unconstitutional means, such as these offences, you say they must be considered political offences. I will take such an instance as is afforded by the action of the hon. Member for Dundee—he is not here now—(Mr. Firth). At one time he was much interested in the Government of London, and fought hard to bring about reform in the Government of London. Suppose he had committed one of these offences, taken part in a riot in Trafalgar Square, used intimidation or offended under any of the six heads of section 2, do you think he would have escaped on the plea that his offence was political, because he committed it with the idea of furthering reform in the Government of London? Certainly not, because he could use the Constitutional means at his disposal. Therefore, I say in no sense of the word can these offences be called political at the present time. If you really want separation, you may call them political, but if you only want the advantages we enjoy in England, then they are not political, and simply render you liable to certain punishments under the criminal law. But I think there is really this distinction; that whether these offences are political or not, they are different to the ordinary offences committed from selfish or sordid motives, and, therefore, I agree with the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment that there ought to be a re-classification of crimes. The most degrading part of the punishment is not the dress, but the association with ordinary criminals, and I say not only with regard to Irish Members and others imprisoned under the Crimes Act, but in reference to members of the Salvation Army, persons who are imprisoned for breach of the Vaccination Laws, and others, there ought to be a distinction drawn between such as these and ordinary vulgar criminals, who commit offences for their own selfish ends. There is no greater danger to the Army than the offence of insubordination, and offenders are rightly subjected to punishment, but I would not class such offenders with criminals convicted of the ordinary crimes of robbery and violence. I would separate such soldiers from ordinary criminals, and, though insubordination is a serious offence and deserves severe punishment,

the taint of crime in the ordinary sense does not attach to it. Certainly I cannot support this Bill, and it would serve the purpose of raising a useful discussion, but for the spirit the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has introduced by his attacks on the present Administration. Leaving aside the question as to whether the right hon. Gentleman was the best Home Secretary that ever existed—an opinion that I susp ect is confined to himself—what we wa nt is to debate the subject, and after the conciliatory spirit with which the d ate opened and the pertinent remarks with which the Amendment was moved, I look for the result, not in the carrying of the Bill or even the Amendment, but a reconsideration of the whole subject and re-classification of offences.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.): It is hard to reconcile the statement of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, that he would vote against this Bill, with the declaration that there are imposed on Irish prisoners certain degrading offices which ought to be abolished. Let me suggest to him that so far as degradation is concerned those who have undergone the experience are most able to discuss the subject. I think none of us can have listened to the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) without a feeling of very great regret that an hon. Member who claims to be the representative of an Irish constituency should have addressed the House in the terms he has used with reference to the punishment of his fellow-countrymen. But I am perfectly willing to meet him on his own ground. I frankly admit it is in the highest extent desirable that there should be a re-classification of political offences, and Anti-vaccinators and persons who offend against the rules laid down for regulating the traffic in the streets are not treated in the same exceptional manner as that sought by this Bill in relation to political offenders. Why does not the hon. Member for South Tyrone, instead of opposing this Bill, propose an expansion by which that object might be accomplished? Again, let me point out this in regard to Anti-vaccinators and Salvationists, that they are never sent to prison without the alternative of a fine, which they frequently decline to pay, and consequently are sent to prison; so I may say it is at their own option they are sent to prison. But I do not intend to press the question on these narrow grounds. I will direct attention to a different aspect of the question. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, with a candour that does him credit, says he regards those persons as political offenders. [MR. BALFOUR expressed dissent.] Now the right hon. Gentleman has an unfortunate habit of failing to recollect what he has said on former occasions, but I think the recollection of the House will be with me when I say that he said these might be classed among political offenders.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As the hon. Gentleman is not willing to accept my contradiction, I will give it in a more formal manner. What I said was that it was very likely these persons had a political object in view, but the crime they committed was not a political one.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: With great respect I do not follow the logic of the right hon. Gentleman, but I daresay it is my own obtusity. It is perfectly true that many a crime committed for a political object is not a political crime—murder or assassination for instance, but inasmuch as it has a political object the person who commits it is classed among political offenders. [*Cries of* "No!"] I hear hon. Members say "No," but I can bring what I think is proof conclusive that in this and other countries this has been the universal practice—or very nearly so. I do not think that there is a man in the House beyond the right hon. Gentleman and his more devoted followers who entertains any doubt that these persons are political offenders. But does the right hon. Gentleman, or does he not, admit that he has control over the prisons in Ireland? I apprehend that he has at length conceded that point. If the right hon. Gentleman admits he has control over the prisons in Ireland, and if these men are political prisoners, why has he hastened to make an entirely new departure in the treatment of political offenders? I have been at some trouble to investigate what the practice in other countries is, and have made inquiries through various foreign agencies of an authentic character. In

France and Austria I find that there is a classification under which political prisoners find altogether different treatment; under the system in Belgium there is the same thing; in France a political offender is only subject to detention; and I find the same applies to Germany and to Italy. Even if you travel beyond the confines of Europe you find in Mexico—a country where we do not regard civilization as being so far advanced as in Europe—political prisoners are allowed to wear their own dress, and are kept separate from other prisoners. Last of all other countries I suppose should we look for a model in Russia, but there is a very interesting book published some time ago by Dr. Langdale, in which the author refers to the political prisoners exiled to Siberia. He tells us that—

"The political prisoner in Siberia, beyond exile and temporary confinement in gaol, is not ill-used; he is not always subjected to the ordinary discipline of the criminal convict, nor obliged to associate with him; and, except in the case of those deprived of all rights, he is permitted to wear his own clothes."

I cannot help thinking that is of very strong import in reference to what I contend is the general practice. Now, I refer to a book written by the learned Solicitor General, in which he deals with the subject of extradition, and he uses this passage—

"If a man were killed in a riot, or in an attempt to excite tumult or popular commotion, that would be a political offence, and the offender would not be liable to extradition."

And now I pass to what is the treatment of political offenders in this country; and a Return, published in the 38th volume of "Accounts and Reports," and moved for in 1840, shows the way in which political offenders were treated in England before the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman. This Return I quote deals with the County of Monmouth, and with persons not in the position of Irish Members, but of far humbler positions in life, men who were farriers, labourers, weavers, and so forth; and among the offences with which they were charged are unlawful assembly, riot, sedition, treason, breaking into houses, violent assault, riotously assembling in arms, stealing a shot-belt and dagger, conspiring to riot, and so forth; and in all these cases the prisoners were, after conviction, allowed the regular county allowance, as before trial, but were not allowed anything extra except by order of the surgeon; they wore their own clothes, had the gaol bedding, were allowed to write to their friends, and so on, and for part of the time they were supplied with writing materials. They were allowed, be it observed, to wear their own dress. I have quoted the Returns for the county of Monmouth, but you may go through the Returns for other counties and find the same exceptional treatment meted out to men who occupied humble positions in life. Then I may ask the right hon. Gentleman why this difference in treatment of political offenders now to that which obtained in England and to which the humblest offenders were subject in 1840? In 1840 the management of prisons was in the hands of the Visiting Justices, and the Home Office possessed no authority in the matter, but the Marquess of Normanby, who was then Home Secretary, on being communicated with by a Chairman of Quarter Sessions—Sir Eardley Wilmot, I think it was—in regard to the treatment of political offenders, pointed out that he had no authority himself, but he thought it extremely desirable that the magistrates should exercise all the powers available to them for the purpose of mitigating the prison treatment of these prisoners. Now the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who not only has very great powers, but full statutory powers not possessed by the Marquess of Normanby in 1840, has not yet even deigned a reply to the appeals made to him to make any representation to the Prisons Board for the purpose of rendering the treatment of these gentlemen less degrading and odious. I have endeavoured to discuss this matter without Party spirit, and regret that that should be introduced in a matter of such gravity. I repeat and urge upon the Chief Secretary, does he question my authorities when I say that in every civilized country in Europe, including Russia—I do not know whether I can include Spain—the treatment of political offenders shows a distinct line of demarcation from that of ordinary criminals? I put it in a more concrete form. Does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that Mr. O'Brien, if convicted in France or Germany of such an offence as he committed in this country, would receive the treatment

which he has received here? I say disdinctly, No; he would simply have been detained in a fortress as a political prisoner. In regard to America, I may point out that there is no general prison supervision, every county has its own prison, and the exact number of prisons is not known; each county exercises its own control, and nowhere is the prison under the superintendence of the State.

*Mr. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I should like first to say that in the speech in which this Bill was introduced there was a remarkable tone and temper, which was extremely welcome on these Benches. In the next place, I would remark that there is a very great contrast between the terms of the Bill and the speech with which it was introduced and the arguments used in the House a few days ago, and repeated by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) a few minutes ago, when he argued that the only way to meet this difficulty is by increasing and enlarging the dispensing power of the Executive. When I saw the Bill on the Paper, I thought that that most dangerous and difficult doctrine had been put aside, at all events, by Irish Members, in favour of a more logical and perfect remedy. If crimes and criminals are to be discriminated, the operation, it seems to me, can only be done either by a specific measure passed by the House which will classify crimes and criminals according to some standard, or—in what I consider the only satisfactory way—by giving an enlarged discretionary power to Judges and others who have to interpret the law to assign definite punishment for definite crimes. If we attempt in this House to discriminate offences on the ground that some are political and some are not, we land ourselves in the enormous difficulty which was specially remarked upon by the right hon. Member for Derby. I should like to take a broader view of this question than has been hitherto taken. We are not now discussing questions of transcendental ethics, for which work we are totally unfitted. We are discussing a question of positive law. Any offence against the law is equally a crime against the State, and stands on the same level; and where there is any discrimination in the methods and severity of punishment, it is not because certain crimes are more heinous to and immoral in themselves, but because they are more dangerous to the community. The more dangerous to the community the offence the more drastic the punishment. That is the only reason why, when sporadic crimes become prevalent, a new and specially severe punishment is imposed. It is because those crimes become more especially dangerous and epidemic that the punishment is increased, and not because there is anything specially heinous in the crimes themselves. If we measure the *rationale* of punishment by such a standard, it appears to me impossible to discriminate between crimes which are said to be political and those which are not political. The offence of high treason has always been visited with the highest and greatest punishment, yet if we are to treat it from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen opposite no offence is more clearly political. The hon. Member who has just spoken said that murder committed from a political motive was no murder.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES: I never made any such statement. What I said was that I entirely excluded cases of assassination and murder from the category of political offences so far as the incidence of punishment was concerned.

*Mr. HOWORTH: Of course I accept the hon. Member's statement, but I certainly thought that was the position the hon. Member had taken up. My memory must have misled me, and, apparently, other Members of the House were misled. But the statement of the hon. Member, as we now have it, reduces the argument to an absurdity when it is pressed to the length of saying that the crime of murder is not to be treated as a political offence. Why should the crime for which Orsini died not be so treated when other crimes standing on the same level in the minds of many men are to be treated in that way? The right hon. Member for Derby in 1882, when arguing, in one of the ablest speeches he ever made in this House, that it is impossible to treat treason and treason-felony as different in essence from other crimes, and as merely political offences, said—

"He could not agree that there was anything exceptional in the character of treason as a crime which deserved exceptional treatment. On the contrary, he thought that almost all persons were in favour of its being dealt with in a similar manner to other crimes."

I present that as an answer to the arguments used by the right hon. Gentleman a few minutes ago. I have been, and still am, very anxious to meet with some definition by which political offences may be logically separated from ordinary crimes. The right hon. Gentleman ended his speech with an attempt at such a definition. He said, in effect, that offences of speaking or writing ought to be put in one category, and offences of active crime in another category altogether. I ask in all seriousness whether he proposes to treat as less dangerous and less worthy of punishment the man who tells another to commit murder or wound cattle than the man who actually does the act? I would also press upon the House that it is not merely the specific words used that must be looked to, but the meaning which the people who hear them put upon those words. I will not further refer to the former speech of the right hon. Gentleman unless my position is challenged; but it seems to me that in every possible way it destroys the argument now sought to be put forward. It is often said that it is a mistake to punish crimes by punishments which do not satisfy the public conscience of the people among whom the law has to be obeyed; and that it brings discredit upon the administration of the law when punishment is stretched beyond what the public conscience deems necessary. That is partially true. But, on the other hand, all history shows that the public conscience of a community is very often framed and limited by its Legal Code, and that communities become impressed with the gravity of offences against morals because they are on the Statute Book and because punishment for them is enforced. The Irish people, with all their many touching and endearing virtues, have, owing to a very cruel and brutal history, a different moral standard inbred in them from that observed in this country; and if that standard is to be altered, so as to make it more sound, it must be by putting upon the Statute Book enactments which will create there a moral standard more in unison with our own. I do not dispute, however, and am ready to admit, that disobedience to the law is sometimes directly encouraged by making punishment too degrading in certain cases, and, if a remedy is to be had, I am in favour of it. I think the only remedy whereby the punishment may be equitably adapted to each offence is by giving to the Judges themselves a greater discriminating power in treating prisoners and a wider power with regard to matters which are more of the nature of discipline than of actual penal enactment. In order to do this, I am bound to confess I should like very much to see some scheme for the reconstruction of the Irish judicial authorities introduced; and when a considerable reduction has been effected in the number of Irish Judges of First Instance, I should like to see the money thus saved spent in what I conceive to be a most necessary reform in Ireland —namely, an increase in the pay and an improvement in the status of the district magistrates, and to see also the limitation of the appointment to that class of men who have had some training as lawyers. I admit that it gives me pain to hear personal attacks upon individual Judges made in this House by responsible politicians, for such attacks must have a disintegrating effect upon public opinion and shake the faith of ignorant men in the neutrality of justice. At the same time I do not think that men who in Ireland have been made police magistrates, and who discharge the double function of interpreting the law and also of administering the police, should be paid such inadequate salaries as they receive at the present moment. You cannot with such salaries and with such a status secure the men most fitted for the position. If you would secure a better class of men, with a better training, you must give them an increased salary and a better status. When you have secured such a reform, you can, with every prudence—and in my mind you ought to—extend the discretion of these magistrates in apportioning punishment. That will be a more logical solution of the difficulty than enlarging the dispensing power of the Chief Secretary, or attempting, through a Bill like the present one, to apportion, as between different offences which cannot be discriminated, different forms of punishment.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The closing passage of the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down is a fine example of irrelevance. We are endeavouring to-day to persuade

the House of Commons to protect a certain class of prisoners in Ireland against the stipendiary magistrates, who are the most unscrupulous agents of the Executive Government; and the hon. Member actually thinks it is relevant to that proposal to ask us to increase the salaries of these magistrates. That proposal appeared to be acceptable to the Chief Secretary; but I noticed that it brought a grim smile to the countenance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was, apparently, so much affected by it that he has already left the House. The hon. Gentleman opposite has ingeniously busied himself in fighting an imaginary case. He has enlarged on the difficulty of distinguishing by a definition between political and non-political offences; but we ask the House to make no such definition. We are sensible of the difficulty that exists, and what we ask the House to do is to declare that in the case of a certain specified class of offenders a distinction shall be made in their prison treatment. The last speaker has endeavoured, in a vague way, to establish a connection between political speeches in Ireland and crime; but I challenge the hon. Member to establish such a relation of cause and effect. The hon. Gentleman must be aware that a tribunal armed with special powers has been sitting for months past, and all its labours up to the present moment have absolutely failed to establish such a relation. And now, Sir, I wish to recall to the attention of the House what I feel is rapidly dropping out of view —I mean the Amendment now before us. The Amendment of the hon. Member for South Tyrone is a most curious production. The Prisons Act of 1877 was passed before that hon. Gentleman adorned the House; but that Act practically declares that it is expedient to make special provision for the treatment of prisoners convicted of sedition. The plea of the hon. Member, if accepted, would put an end to all legislation whatever, because it amounts to this—that a Bill for one purpose is to be rejected because it does not contain something else. The Irish Members have enough to do to deal with the case of Ireland. We claim that in regard to an exceptional Act, applied to our own country only, and working by means of exceptional tribunals, there should be an amendment of the law; and if the hon. Member for Tyrone will introduce a Bill to remove the grievances of anti-vaccinationists and Salvationists, and will not treat his own Bill, as he did another one the other day, as a farce, the Irish Members will give it a much better reception than the evasive and discreditable hostility which has been offered to their Bill to-day. I put to the hon. Member this question: If this Bill of ours be rejected, if it fail to pass, and if we introduce a Bill to deal more generously with the case of prisoners whose offences are not of a character usually associated with crime, will he, and his friends, support that Bill?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, South): I have no hesitation in saying that I will consider any Bill he introduces on its merits.

MR. SEXTON: As the bird fanciers might say, the hon. Member has been struck under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. There is too much of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in his reply to entitle it to attention. I invite the House to observe a contrast. Here is the hon. Member for South Tyrone—a man who has few admirers anywhere—attempting to perpetuate a system of torture which has been applied ruthlessly and shamefully in the case of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kildare; and here is the hon. Member for Kildare—a man of such gentleness of character and such culture and such high principle that he has many friends on both sides of the House, and few enemies anywhere outside of it. I have disposed of the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. I can only tell him that, in my opinion, it is completely irrelevant to the Bill. I can hardly imagine that any Member of the House, except a Member moved by eternal affection for the Amendment, can bring himself to support it; and if the Government gives it any countenance, I can only conclude that they think any Amendment good enough to defeat an Irish Bill. Now, I come to the Bill itself, and I claim for it that, so far from proposing anything novel, startling, or questionable, it is in accord with the spirit of the law, and of the prison rules as they exist. Our opponents speak as if it were proposed that all

prisoners shall be treated alike. We claim special treatment for one class of prisoners, and I enforce that plea by pointing out to the House that special treatment of classes of prisoners is at present the rule of the prison service. May I first refer to the case of debtors? The non-fulfilment of an order of the Court to pay a debt may involve a grievous wrong, and inflict the worst injury on innocent persons, even to the loss of their means of living; and yet, by a special rule of the Prison Department of Ireland, the debtor is saved from all the indignities inflicted on ordinary criminals. I now pass to the case of the Statute of Edward III. How does it happen that Father Stephens, when imprisoned under that Statute, was not subjected to any prison indignity; while Father Clarke, who was imprisoned under the Statute of Victoria, was treated as a common criminal? I may mention that by the Act of 1877 persons imprisoned for contempt of Court are treated as first-class misdemeanants. Where is the consistency of such a system? Now I come to the strongest case of all —that of seditious libel and sedition. Seditious libel is an offence which, in the eye of any Government, ranks next to treason in gravity. Incitement to sedition is incitement to rebellion and disorder, and sedition may provoke not merely the loss of individual lives, but massacres. It is an offence next to the capital offence, and it may, in certain cases, have consequences as grave, and even more grave, than those following upon treason. Yet under the Prisons Act of 1877, and under the rules framed in furtherance of that Act, prisoners for seditious libel and sedition are treated as first-class misdemeanants, and they are exempted from all those indignities which are inflicted in Ireland upon the men who attend a meeting of a branch of the National League, or who publish a report of the proceedings in a newspaper. I claim that no reason can be shown for inflicting these indignities and hardships upon prisoners under the Crimes Act, when they are not inflicted on prisoners for sedition. Now, Sir, since the passing of the Prisons Act of 1877 a situation totally new has been created in Ireland. I believe, if the Coercion Act had been passed before the Prisons Act, the House would not have hesitated to include in the Prisons Act such a provision as we ask you to agree to to-day. The Prisons Act contemplated conviction by an independent jury and sentence by an independent Judge; but many prisoners are now convicted by two itinerant Justices, who are paid servants of the Executive, and who can be appointed, promoted, and dismissed at the will of the Chief Secretary. Therefore, I say, a special case exists for the amendment of the Prisons Act, and for altering the prison rules, because the Government, by their coercive legislation, have created in Ireland a new kind of jurisdiction, a new offence, and a class of prisoners which was not in the mind of the Legislature when the Prisons Act was passed. Now, Sir, may I ask the House to consider for a moment the nature of the Coercion Act itself? How was it passed? It was passed through political capital generated by a crime—a crime which had been signally and memorably avenged by the suicide of the criminal. If it had not been for the forged letter, and the public opinion generated by that letter, it would have been impossible for the Government to break down the rights of the House of Commons in passing the Coercion Act, and they could never have prevented us debating the Bill in Committee and on Report. We should then have had an opportunity of debating the clause which enables the Government to treat political prisoners as ordinary criminals, which regulates the mode and extent of the punishment, and which enables the Government to subject political prisoners in Ireland to indignities. The Coercion Bill was passed by this House by an act of criminal fraud, and we are entitled now to ask for atonement. I hope you regret and deplore that fraud. I say our claim on you is exceptional, and we now call upon you, by passing this Bill, to do that which I have no doubt you would have done for us if we had been able to ask it when the Coercion Act was passed. Sir, that Act was a political measure, because it was passed against the will of the representatives of the Irish people; and there never is a case of a penal Act passed for a country against the will of the representatives of the people of that country unless it be a political Act. The Act was also passed against the will of one

of the Imperial Parties in the State, and it is administered by the instruments of one Party, and in the real or fancied interests of that Party, and nothing else. Do Englishmen mean to say that an Act passed in face of the stern and resolute opposition of one of the Imperial Parties in the State is an Act which was passed against non-political crime? These facts are conclusive that the Coercion Act is directed, not against crime as ordinarily understood in any civilized country in the world, but against acts and words of a strictly political character. If the Chief Secretary had used his power, we should not have found it necessary to trouble the House with the present Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby never said a truer thing than when he stated that this question might have been met by administration without legislation. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who is ever ready with his evasive subtleties and superficialities, might to-morrow meet these cases by a set of rules for the instruction of the Visiting Justices; but he has refused to use his power, and tells us to procure an amendment of the law. Now we offer an amendment of the law, and we ask him to affirm that all or some of the prisoners under the Crimes Act are entitled, not to be treated as first-class misdemeanants, but, at any rate, to some special or particular mode of treatment. But what is the treatment we receive at the hands of officials in Ireland? The other day the Corporation of Dublin appointed a deputation of Justices of the Peace to wait on the General Prisons Board. But that Board refused to see the deputation, although it was composed of persons concerned by their office in the administration of the law and the preservation of order. The insolence which characterizes the Chief Secretary, Sir, pervades every part of the administration of my unfortunate country. In England it is easy to get interviews with departmental officials and even with Cabinet Ministers; but the paltriest clerk in Dublin Castle, by virtue of the insolence which is the dominant note of the Government, thinks he may slam the door of his office in your face. I ask the Chief Secretary to consider for a moment whether his supporters and friends are satisfied with his policy in this regard. [*A Laugh.*] He laughs at that, but I may remind him of the speech the other day of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in which that right hon. Gentleman declared that if a Bill of this kind were introduced he would be inclined to support it. At the same time, I do not know whether any speech of the right hon. Gentleman, even in his own judgment, holds good for a fortnight. But if his speeches are of such perishable material, I think his declarations are entitled to some attention from the Minister responsible for the affairs of Ireland. But I would further remind the Chief Secretary that a distinguished Judge, who is a most pronounced Unionist, has attacked his policy, and I would beg the Chief Secretary also to note the change in the tone of some of the Unionist organs, such as the *Standard*, *Telegraph*, and *Echo*, both in London and the Provinces, as proof of the fact that public opinion is growing tired of this policy of torture, and would gladly see an end put to this policy of futile exasperation. Does the Chief Secretary think his policy has succeeded? He speaks of the diminution of serious crimes; but that has nothing to do with the case, because the Coercion Act was not passed against such crimes. Serious crimes, such as were committed the other day in broad daylight in Clare, are committed with impunity just in the very districts where all the resources and all the machinery of the Coercion Act has been diligently applied for a period of nearly two years. We are told that boycotting has diminished, but the figures about boycotting are mere vapour. They rest upon the word of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or upon information conveyed to him by some anonymous clerk in Dublin Castle, and the right hon. Gentleman has refused to give any evidence about those figures. We have always challenged his figures, and we even say that the Government, from their late associations in Courts and elsewhere, are now in the position of persons whose evidence requires to be corroborated. The figures about boycotting were high two years ago, and why, Sir? Because this fancy barometer runs up and down in Ireland to suit the convenience of the Government. Two years ago the figures were high,

because the Government wanted to pass the Coercion Act; now they are low, because it is the cue of the Government, because they want to say that the Act has availed to effect their object; and, Sir, the figures will be high again next year if you want to pass a fresh Coercion Act or amend the present one, and to back up another Pigott enterprize. I reject the figures on boycotting, as I reject any evidence offered by a Minister who declines to submit tests when challenged. I say, further, that the whole question turns on the number of evicted farms. The Lord Lieutenant spared a few moments from his sports last year to give us some figures on this subject; but those figures were blown to pieces by the hon. Member for Shoreditch, and the Lord Lieutenant has never dared to repeat them. If the prison treatment of the Government in Ireland has failed to permit the leasing of evicted farms, it has availed to do nothing. I am here to say, on the authority of those who know every county in Ireland, that it has failed to effect your object. I challenge you to produce your figures and support them by details, and I have my friends' authority for saying that, although the Government have put agitators, editors, clergymen, and tenants into prison, and compelled them to associate with the basest and most degraded of criminals in the hours of exercise, those agitators and those editors, clergymen, and tenants were more powerful than ever; they have greater political influence, and that has been the effect of your course of persecution and exasperation. The number of evicted farms is greater now than it was when the Coercion Act was passed. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who says that nothing could degrade a man who was conscious of an honourable motive. I do not think your prison treatment can degrade any man, but your intention is to degrade him, and, whatever the effect may be upon his own mind and heart, he has the right to resist your base and personal motive. The Chief Secretary sees that the indignities of his prison treatment have failed to render less keen the opposition of the men he has incarcerated. They have returned to the prison again and again. Have they not pursued the same course after as before imprisonment? Are they less strong in the eyes of the community? Is their political power diminished? The Chief Secretary must answer every question of this nature in the negative; and these negatives are a better condemnation of his system than any arguments which may be used. What about the men who have not yielded; what about Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Carew? The Chief Secretary, in a mood of after-dinner gaiety, ridiculed the message which I sent him, acting under the spur of an urgent sense of public duty. Hon. Gentlemen may not know the fact that I had become aware from the public prints that my hon. Friend and colleague and countryman, Mr. William O'Brien, had been thrown down by prison warders first upon his face, then upon his back, his arms twisted, and then that he was dragged across the yard, and so treated that he was driven into a state of insensibility. ["Oh!" *and laughter.*] You laugh. He was brought into such a condition—a gentleman the equal of any of you in character, and the superior of any of you in intellect—that the Visiting Justice who saw him sent for a clergyman, a proceeding which is generally regarded in Ireland as heralding the danger of death. Is it to be said that I, who was responsible for the conduct and peace of the people, was not bound—when I heard that the prison authorities of Clonmel were in communication with the right hon. Gentleman on the subject, and that he might be forming a decision on the subject that very night—to avert the danger of the death of my hon. Friend, and the danger of an insurrection the next day in Ireland? The right hon. Gentleman objects to have a telegram sent him at 11 or 12 o'clock at night; but he does not object to hustle Mr. O'Brien from Clonmel Gaol to Tullamore at 3 o'clock in the morning. At what hour does he make arrests in Ireland? His myrmidons through the country make arrests burglariously, by arresting men and taking them from their beds at night. In the message which I sent him I denounced his conduct with regard to my friend. The right hon. Gentleman took upon himself to ridicule that message before a pack of cowards who thought they were laughing privately. But the right hon. Gentleman is not a spontaneous humourist. I think that very

often when the jest is on his lips there is graver matter in his heart; because, although it is true he ridiculed the message I sent him, yet, three days later, he yielded the whole question. Mr. O'Brien has not yielded to him. Mr. Carew has not yielded to him. Is it worth his while to stake the cause of the Union upon a conflict of this kind? I told him in my message that his treatment was not only brutal, but illegal. I am of that opinion still. Can the right hon. Gentleman lay his finger upon any rule which entitles the prison authorities to deprive a prisoner of his clothes by the use of physical violence? By the rules of the prison, if a prisoner disobeys in the matter of discipline, the Governor may send him to 24 hours' confinement. There is a rule for repeated disobedience, which provides that the Visiting Committee may send the prisoners to close confinement for a longer period. There is no rule, and there is no suggestion, that a prisoner who refuses to wear the prison clothes should have his clothes taken off by violence. Nay, more; there is another prison rule that no prison officer shall strike a prisoner except in self-defence. Did the right hon. Gentleman violate that rule or did he not, when he authorized his subordinates to seize Mr. O'Brien, to throw him down, and to reduce him to insensibility? Was that or not a violation of the rule which directs prison officers not to use violence to prisoners except in self-defence? I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, if the prisoner refuses to wear the prison clothes, and if you take off his own clothes, whether you are entitled to leave him naked? The rules declare that nothing shall be done to injure the mind or body of any prisoner. Are you entitled to leave a man naked for hours and days together, to the probable danger of his life? I say you are not entitled, and that course is manifestly illegal. The Statute of 1877 declares that no rule shall be passed in contravention of the Act of George IV., which states that every prisoner is entitled, not as a matter of favour or privilege, but as a matter of strict legal right, to two hours' exercise every day in the open air. If you throw a prisoner down and then leave him naked, you deprive him of his right to exercise in the open air, and, in that, I say you commit a manifest violation of the Statute. But what is the use of talking of illegality? These crimes are committed. The Public Prosecutor in Ireland is the aider and abettor of these crimes. He will not consent to prosecute, or, if he does, he packs a jury for an acquittal. Let me point out to the right hon. Gentleman that there is no indemnity for crime. These acts may not be punished at the present moment; yet Public Prosecutors, like other functionaries, are changed, and it may be that not only the warder, the doctor, or the Prison Commissioner, but possibly the Minister himself, may have to stand his trial for committing and abetting these offences, before a jury which will not be packed for an acquittal. Sir the policy of the right hon. Gentleman may be a policy of exasperation. If that be his policy, he will have to avow it here. If that be his policy it will fail. Because, great as are the forces of exasperation at his command—and great they are by reason of the law, and lamentably great they are by reason of his individual disposition and character—great as those forces are, they yield in potentiality to the forces of patience and hope—forces inspired in the hearts of the Irish people by the policy of that illustrious statesman the Member for Mid Lothian, and by their confidence in the just and generous disposition of the people of this country. I shall not attempt to follow the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir W. T. Marriott), who pretends to say that a movement for an Irish Republic is political, while a movement for Home Rule is criminal. That is the learned Gentleman's contention, and I leave it to the appreciation of the House. I say the just and generous sense of the people of this country will not much longer tolerate a system by which men, for political acts, are seized, stripped, and thrown down in their prisons. They will insist that Irishmen, engaged in a political movement for the emancipation of the tillers of the soil, and the effectuation of the autonomy of their country, shall be treated, even in prison, as honest men, and not as criminals. Sir, if the right hon. Gentleman accepts this Bill, he will act in the spirit, as I have shown, of the existing law, and will show that he has the grace and the statesmanship to retrace a false step, and he will merit the approval that

always attaches to a frank confession of error. But, Sir, if he refuses this Bill, we shall receive his refusal with equanimity. His refusal will not injure the cause which we have at heart, for that cause, thank Heaven! is beyond his power to injure. His refusal will only render more speedy the ruin of his own administration, and still further abridge that fast-narrowing span of time during which any of my countrymen will have to submit to the insolence, the meanness, and the imbecile cruelty of his administration in Ireland.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester): Sir, with whatever pleasure we may listen to the periods of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, I think many of us feel cause for regret, which I certainly share, that he should have taken the discussion off the lines on which it was running before he got up, and that he should have introduced into a controversy which purely concerns the business of administration so many burning topics that have recently had their place in Irish controversy. Personally, I regret it myself, because I shall be obliged briefly to deal with some of the points raised by the hon. Gentleman in the last part of his speech—points I should gladly have left untouched, because they are not closely relevant to the discussion before the House. The right hon. Gentleman has taken the opportunity of giving a version of an incident which occurred in Ireland a short time ago, and shortly before the Liberal Unionist Banquet in which I took part, and he justified his action in sending these post-prandial telegrams by saying that he was made acquainted through the public Press that Mr. O'Brien had been knocked down, thrown on his face, thrown on his back, and knelt upon; his arms twisted, he himself dragged across the prison yard, and reduced to a state of insensibility, and had caused his friends to fear for his life. I do not think the hon. Gentleman in his speech at all exaggerated the statements in the *Freeman's Journal* to which he referred. But I should have thought that the right hon. Gentleman knew enough of the source from which that information came to entertain a scepticism which might have prevented his sending me a telegram at such a very unseasonable hour, and that he might have waited until he obtained more authentic information as to the veracity of the account he received. As the right hon. Gentleman has taken this opportunity of repeating these calumnies, I take the opportunity of again giving a most absolute and explicit contradiction to every one of the statements made by him. If any hon. or right hon. Gentleman in the House has any doubt as to the enormous character of the fictions to which the right hon. Gentleman has—no doubt unconscious of their character—given currency on the present occasion, he has only got to read the Report of Dr. O'Farrell. He will then see how utterly baseless and untrue they are, how cruel to the prison officials concerned, and how unjustifiable it is for newspapers to invent and for hon. Gentlemen to propagate fables of that kind.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS: Will the right hon. Gentleman give us a Committee to investigate them?

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then the Lord Mayor of Dublin proceeded to accuse me of illegal action because the prison officials used physical force to compel obedience to prison regulations. But under the prison rules every prisoner is required to put on prison clothes, and I am advised by those whom I have consulted on the point, and who are fully competent to advise me, that the prison authorities are justified in using such force as may be absolutely necessary in order to carry the prison rules into effect. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would prefer that the prisoner should, in such a case, not be coerced, but punished. The right hon. Gentleman thinks that the preferable course. I can only say that we avoided it because it was the least humane course. I do not deny, if this sort of scene is to be repeated when any gentleman thinks he ought not to put on prison clothes, that it may be more convenient to adopt the mode of treatment suggested by the hon. Gentleman. But I must protest against the assertion that the prison officials left Mr. O'Brien naked. If we are to use the English language at all, let us use it with some accuracy. Can you properly describe a man who is left in a prison cell (recollect heated to a temperature of 60 degrees or 70 degrees), with an excellent suit of

clothes beside him, as being left naked? Our conduct may be good or bad, and I am not going to justify it or the reverse; but I do assert that it cannot properly be described by the phrase leaving the prisoner naked. The right hon. Gentleman has asked me whether I think my policy in Ireland has suceeded. I can give him a very brief and clear answer to that question. I think it has succeeded and is succeeding. I think it has succeeded and is succeeding amid difficulties which have never been placed before any Government previously. It has succeeded and is succeeding in the face of a conspiracy, in which Members both below and above the Gangway appear to be engaged, to make the enforcement of the law impossible. That success is not demonstrated merely by the statistics of agrarian crime, though it is amply demonstrated by them; it is also demonstrated by the statistics of boycotting, upon which the hon. Gentleman has commented. He says these statistics are pure fiction, and he bases that statement on the idea that every official connected with these statistics is untrustworthy. I feel sure that that opinion, though shared by hon. Members below the Gangway, is not shared by right hon. Gentlemen on the benches opposite. The statistics of boycotting are as carefully preparad as the statistics of agrarian outrage. I assert boldly that the result of every examination of the facts I have been able to make, checked by independent reports from all sorts and conditions of men, convinces me beyond a doubt that the improvement which has occurred in this Department of Irish administration—the enormous diminution of the vilest form of intimidation which has ever been preached or practised on a large scale—is such that, if no other result had happened from the passing of the Crimes Act 18 months ago, this diminution would have amply justified it. The right hon. Gentleman says, "How about boycotted farms?" The information I have received about boycotted farms confirms the information I have received with regard to other questions raised by the hon. Gentleman. Boycotted farms are being taken more freely.

*Mr. J. ELLIS: Give us some instances.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman opposite, who probably agrees that to take a boycotted farm is a crime against society——

*Mr. J. ELLIS: The right hon. Gentleman must not put that into my mouth. I asked the right hon. Gentleman for facts and figures with regard to his statement.

*Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg to tell the hon. Gentleman that if I were to give the names of those who have taken boycotted farms, and make them public, I should be carrying out the intention which I understand the hon. Gentleman himself to disclaim, but which is not disclaimed by his allies below the Gangway—I should hand over the persons who have exercised that legitimate right to the vengeance of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. I assert that there is no country in the world which would consider these crimes as in any sense political. Point out to me a civilized country which would allow the forms of intimidation preached and practised by Members below the Gangway to pass unpunished or punished lightly, because, forsooth, the persons who had preached and practised them had declared they did so in the interests of the independence of their country. That plea would be swept aside without a moment's consideration; and, though I admit that the English law recognizes no distinction, except in the one case of sedition, between crimes political and crimes non-political, I do not admit that, in this matter, we are behind our neighbour. Some useful hints are supplied by a Commission appointed to deal with the difficult subject of extradition. The Commission reported in 1878. Upon the Commission were the late Sir Alexander Cockburn, Lord Selborne, Baron Blackburn, Mr. Russell Gurney, Sir Richard Baggallay, Sir William Brett, Sir James Stephen, and "our trusty and well-beloved Sir William George Vernon Harcourt, Knight." This Report said, very properly, that purely political offences ought to be excluded from extradition, and it gave some sort of general account of those offences. The Report went on to say—

> "It becomes a very different thing when, in furtherance of some political, or pretended political, purpose, foul crimes are committed."

I think that distinction drawn by this Commission is exactly the right one. In

so far as the offence is political, leave it unpunished or treat it differently from other offences as you please; but the offences now under our consideration are not political. They are directed against the individual and not against the State, and it is for that reason that I protest against many of the distinctions which hon. Gentlemen opposite have attempted to draw upon this subject. I leave now with some reluctance the speech of the hon. Gentleman, and go to some of the arguments advanced in the early part of the discussion; and here I am bound to reply to the speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. I am sorry he is not here. I am aware—and he told the House—that he had to go away on business; but I confess that, while one of the most agreeable duties I have to perform is that of answering the right hon. Gentleman, the pleasure is greatly diminished when the right hon. Gentleman is not present to hear my reply. The right hon. Gentleman was this afternoon in one of his statesmanlike moods. He only lapsed from that under the temptation of attacking Dr. Barr, and his attack on Dr. Barr was not only violent, and so unjustifiable that I must say I think the manner in which the Member for Derby spoke of Dr. Barr because he wrote a letter, not in connection with his prison duties in England—not having relation to any functions he is now asked to perform in Ireland—but merely having a retrospective reference to duties which he did perform there, and in respect to the performance of which he has been the victim of some of the basest attacks ever made upon a public man—I say that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby's attack on Dr. Barr is not only most unjust, but most ungenerous. He has made himself the bravo of Gentlemen below the Gangway. He has attacked a man whom they are always attacking, and has done his best to blast the character and ruin the prospects of one who has always done his duty fearlessly and always performed his public functions most ably and conscientiously. I turn now to the more properly argumentative part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. He said that all these difficulties would have been avoided by reasonable administration—in other words, he suggested that the Executive Government should have interfered with regard to a certain section of Crimes Act prisoners, and if they had done so this difficulty would never have come before us. The right hon. Gentleman's doctrine on this point is not only very bad doctrine, but it is entirely new doctrine. It is a doctrine which was not believed in by himself when he was at the Home Office; it was not believed in by the right hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division when he was Chief Secretary, but was invented in the happy freedom from responsibility of political opposition. The right hon. Gentleman now says to his political opponents—"You are responsible for the way in which the Act is administered in our prisons." The House will remember the long and eloquent answer given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby to a question not addressed to him on the prison treatment of Mr. Davitt. From that answer, one would have supposed that the right hon. Gentleman, when in office, was in the habit of telling the prison officials what they would have to do, and the medical officers of the prisons what they would have to prescribe. That is the gloss the right hon. Gentleman now puts on the matter, but it was not the version the right hon. Gentleman, as Home Secretary, gave to the House of Commons, when asked in the House how Mr. Davitt was being treated. This is his answer, and it is very important; for it shows the doctrine always held, and still held by responsible Ministers. He was asked, on the 7th of February, 1881, how Mr. Davitt was being treated, and he answered—

"When Mr. Davitt was taken into custody, I ordered that a medical report should be made as to the condition of his health, and that report was accordingly made last Friday. The report states that he was suffering from bronchial catarrh, to which, it is said, he has been subject. Thereupon"—that is, in consequence of the medical report—"I issued general instructions to the effect that he should be treated with all possible indulgence, and that the greatest possible attention should be paid to the state of his health."

Just so; but my point is that in 1881 he did not take the view which he took to-day, and that he left it to the prison doctor to say what the treatment of the prisoner was to be. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

"I have also directed that particular attention should be given to his having proper diet,

proper rooms, and proper bedding. He will be kept apart from the other convicts, a matter which is possible by the rules under which persons placed on probation in confinement are treated."

Again, you will observe, that, in defending the treatment of Mr. Davitt, it is not to his own dispensing power that the right hon. Gentleman appeals, but to the rules to which every Secretary of State is subject. On a later day, February 11, 1881, in reply to a question, he says—

"Sir, visits to persons in prisons are made under certain fixed rules, and those rules cannot be safely departed from at the instance of any particular class of persons, whether Members of this House or otherwise."

He adds—

"I wish to add, however, that in consideration of the fact that Davitt was suffering from indisposition at the time of his committal, I have, on the application of a private friend of the prisoner, directed that a special visit from that friend shall be permitted, in order that the friends of Davitt may be satisfied as to the state of his health, and that he is not suffering any physical hardship in consequence of his detention."

I want to point out that, whereas the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby and Lord Spencer now say that the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary ought to interfere with the particular punishments meted out to prisoners, in their statements in Parliament they constantly referred to the prison rules; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division, in mentioning the amount of privilege given to Mr. Harrington, when he had been relieved from the disagreeable incidents of prison discipline, never had the courage to announce this doctrine to the House which we now hear of for the first time in all its naked absurdity—that it is the business of the Executive Government to modify, at their own will, the prison discipline in favour of particular prisoners. The right hon. Member for Derby says that Home Secretaries are always modifying prison treatment, and he actually takes as an illustration the case of infanticide. Now, what is the law with regard to infanticide? Under the law as it at present stands, the Judge has no option whatever but to inflict the extreme penalty of death. Of course, in these circumstances the absurdity is corrected, not by an administrative act, but by the Royal Prerogative of Mercy, and if the right hon. Member for Derby—that champion of Prerogative—were to say that the case of infanticide is a precedent, that would only show that he does not understand the law under which Crimes Act prisoners are committed. Then, the right hon. Gentleman says that, as we had failed to remedy the difficulty by administrative means, the magistrates ought to have got us out of the difficulty by inflicting different sentences. I would like to point out that, although you may listen by the hour to speeches on the other side of the House with regard to the infliction of sentences by resident magistrates in Ireland, you never hear that there is any such thing at all as an appeal from those sentences. Now, all these cases are cases in which an appeal is possible. It is stated though most untruly, that I gave directions or hints to the Resident Magistrates that they were not to make these men first-class misdemeanants. But I have no power over the County Court Judges. They are as independent of me as they are of you; they are as independent as the superior Judges in Ireland. They did mitigate sentences and make prisoners first class misdemeanants in some cases. Why, then, did not Mr. Harrington appeal if he thought he ought to be made a first-class misdemeanant, seeing that the County Court Judges had shown no reluctance to put men into that class? But Mr. Harrington did not appeal, and that is sufficient to prove that in Mr. Harrington's opinion the sentence would not have been modified by the County Court Judge upon appeal. Now, observe, we pride ourselves on the fact that the progress of democracy means the progress of equal laws. But if you carry out the principles recently developed on that Bench you will have anything but equal laws. I cannot imagine anything more detrimental to the progress of equal laws or to the equality of sentences; I cannot conceive anything against which a man interested in equality should more sternly set his face than the doctrine now enunciated from the front Opposition Bench. I hope the House has followed the controversy closely enough to understand that it is not in the interest of humanity, but of politics, that this agitation has

been in the first instance started. I could admit that the people of this country who have been affected by the agitation are influenced by motives of humanity and of humanity alone. But those who started the agitation, by their own confession, have been moved by political considerations, and political considerations almost entirely. Mr. O'Brien stated, I think in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, that the primary object of his action with regard to prison treatment was to make the government of Ireland impossible. A similar declaration was made by the hon. Member for East Mayo, confirming the original statement of Mr. O'Brien, and implying that all this agitation about prison clothes, treatment, and diet had been started for a purely political object and in the interests of a purely political Party. Therefore, though that should not modify any conclusion we may come to on the merits of the question, let us understand that it is not humanity but politics that is at the root of the whole matter. Why is it that in this Bill Crimes Act prisoners alone are contemplated? Why, because it is only in relation to Crimes Act prisoners that you can get up political excitement and manufacture political capital. You would never get a "National Protest" in favour of the victims of the Vaccination Acts or the Bribery Acts, or for the purpose of condemning the way in which members of the Salvation Army are treated. They have no political value, and therefore it is that, year after year, you allow their fate to go uncommented upon in this House; and at this moment, when you bring in a Bill which is far more applicable to them than it is to any Gentleman sitting below the Gangway, even within the four corners of that Bill there is no reference, however remote, to the lot of any one of these classes of prisoners. But will this Bill satisfy the Gentlemen themselves who have brought it in? Here I note a curious and interesting contradiction. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby, in explaining his views, told us that, roughly speaking, the persons he wanted to relieve were the persons who made speeches and wrote articles. That, however, is not the view of the hon. Member for Cork and his Party sitting below the Gangway, for the hon. Member for Cork, at a dinner at the Eighty Club the other day said that "Larkin was convicted of a political offence—just as much a political offence as those committed by Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Carew." Now, what was Larkin committed for, and who committed him? Larkin was a man tried before Chief Baron Palles for resisting the process of the law, and Chief Baron Palles sentenced him to 18 months' hard labour, and at the end of that time to find security for his good behaviour, which would, as the learned Judge said, give an opportunity to those who induced Larkin to commit this crime to come forward and find the sureties. Now, the House will observe these two doctrines; the one propounded above the Gangway, that the man who makes a speech or writes an article, and he alone, is a political offender, and should be treated exceptionally; and the far more logical doctrine expounded by the hon. Member for Cork, that the man who violently resists the process of the law —is, not less than the man who incites him to that act, a political prisoner, and is to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant. This Bill will not satisfy either the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby or hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, because it is founded on no principle, will stand no examination, and will not bear a moment's argument. Remember that if you pass this Bill you will make first-class misdemeanants of men guilty of boycotting, of riot, of unlawful assembly, of taking forcible possession, and of promoting the objects of illegal associations. Now, are you really prepared, in the face of experience and Irish history, to carry out a policy like that? You had the experience in Mr. Forster's time of making these people first-class misdemeanants, and the result was that it ceased to be a punishment and became almost a luxury to be sent to prison. I, therefore, venture to say that I have shown, in the first place, that administrative interference is not the proper method of dealing with this Question, and not the method that any previous Government has adopted, and not the method that this Government could adopt without grave danger to law in this country and in Ireland. I have also shown, in the second place, that if the Courts of Law have not carried out the intentions which the right hon. Gentleman thinks they ought to have carried out, it is because persons have not appealed to them. In the third place, I

have shown that this Bill, if carried, would satisfy neither the Member for Derby nor the Member for Cork, and I have suggested what I believe to be the case, that if you are really to carry this Bill into effect, and make the grave crimes I have enumerated only punishable by imprisonment as first-class misdemeanants, you would rob punishment of that which alone makes it valuable or justifiable — namely, its deterrent effects. A few words in regard to my own view of this question. I have been told over and over again that there is a great tide of public opinion arising upon this subject. I am not at all prepared to say that the judicious efforts of the gentlemen who get up the "national protest" may not have produced an effect upon the public mind in some parts of the country. I do not doubt it at all, but it is poor statesmanship to make irrational and wholly unjustifiable alterations in the fundamental law and procedure in this country in obedience to any mere passing phase of public opinion. While I say that, I also fully grant that it is equally poor statesmanship not to try and find out what there is defensible, rational, and logical at the bottom of the feeling which at any particular crisis has been excited in the country. I am utterly unable to accept, the particular solution which has been given either by this Bill or in any of the speeches which I have heard from gentlemen who support the Bill. It seems to me irrational, indefensible, and destructive of equality before the law; but I quite admit that there may be, and very likely is, something entirely justifiable in the feeling which has been aroused, and of which the Bill is the illogical and unreasonable expression. With regard to prison rules I do not profess to speak as one who has either time or inclination to study the question, and I also have to recognize that while the tendency of modern legislation has been in the direction indicated in the rules embodied in the English Act of 1865, and the Irish Act of 1877, by which a rigid uniformity of practice has been imposed on every prisoner, be he whom he may, and be he condemned for what offence he may. That is the whole tendency of modern legislation and our prison discipline both in England and Ireland has been subject to so many and such recent revision at the hands of Royal Commissioners that I confess I have the utmost doubt of my own views on the subject, and I should reluctantly venture to differ from any conclusions at which the Royal Commissioners arrived, or which have been embodied in the legislation that has been from time to time passed by Parliament. Yet I confess at the same time that for my own part I never have been able to understand on what principle such things as prison clothes, hair cutting, and matters of that kind have been enforced on every kind of prisoner, wholly irrespective of his condition. They are classed under the prison rules, I believe, as matters appertaining to health; and I apprehend there is no doubt whatever that the origin of all those rules was a sanitary origin. But though they arose simply from considerations of health and cleanliness they have been enforced by a rigid iron rule of uniformity on every prisoner, even although he did not require the application of them either on the ground of health or of cleanliness. Consider a case which I heard of only a few hours ago. I heard of a respectable woman, the wife of an English tradesman, who got into some trouble by refusing to have her child vaccinated. She was brought up before the magistrates, was convicted, and went to prison; she was forcibly stripped and put into the bath; she was in fact treated in precisely the same manner as if she had been the dirtiest of tramps taken up in the streets. ["Shame!"] You may say "Shame," but recollect that these are the rules which the Royal Commissioners have adopted, and which you have sanctioned and acquiesced in for years. It certainly appears to me, in so far as I understand the philosophy of punishment at all, that these kinds of puntshment which do not inflict discomfort, but which are thought by some persons to inflict degradation, need not, and ought not to, form part of the penal system, because the evil of that kind of punishment is this—that the hardened criminal is not punished by it at all. The hardened and habitual criminal suffers no discomfort, no degradation by being compelled to put on the prison clothes and all the rest of it; and to the tramp who has not a good suit of clothes I believe it may often be a positive luxury to get the prison clothes. There are other classes of rules that are

equally absurd. Controversies have been raised about my action in Ireland in regard to priests. Now, the question of the clerical habit of the priest is only one of a series of similar problems which you may have to meet at any moment in your treatment of prisoners in regard to their religion both in England and Ireland. Take, for instance, the case of Jews. If you rigidly enforced your prison rules, the Jew necessarily would suffer in his religious feelings; and the result is—I believe illegally—that some modification has been made in the English prisons in respect to Jews. A corresponding question arises in the case of other religions and nationalities. As I have just stated, these rules as to prison clothes, dietary, and the like, as in those questions of religious feeling, have a cast iron uniformity which recent legislation has imposed that appears to me to be highly absurd. Many suggestions have been made on both sides in favour of classifying prisoners according to their offences. I have myself no objection to that experiment being tried; but I am told by those possessing experience, that it is almost certain to fail; and unless there be very strong authority for doing it I should not embark on such a futile enterprise. But I think it is eminently worthy of consideration by the prison authorities, both in England and Ireland, whether we cannot remove whatever may be repulsive in the administration of the prison rules in England and Ireland. Of course, I need not say to those hon. Gentlemen who have done me the honour of listening to my innumerable speeches in the House on this subject, that I see no distinction that can or ought to be made in favour of prisoners who were committed under a particular Statute passed the year before last. I do not think that they ought to have or deserve to have any special treatment; but they ought to receive, like all other prisoners, the benefit of any modification that may be made in the prison rules of England or of Ireland. But the prison rules are embodied in an Act of Parliament, and they cannot be altered in England without another Act of Parliament. In Ireland, I believe, the case is somewhat different. I believe that the Lord Lieutenant in Council, with the sanction of Parliament, may make such modification to the rules as I have suggested. My present idea of dealing with this matter—mind I pronounce no final decision—is to ask one or two gentlemen in whose judgment and knowledge of prison rules we have confidence to investigate this Question from the point of view which I have, however imperfectly, attempted to sketch to the House; and possibly by their aid we may be able of remove any shadow or semblance of grievance connected with any class of prison treatment, either in this country or in Ireland. I cannot sit down without expressing in the strongest language my conviction that it is not the Gentleman who have urged boycotting, who have urged resistance to the law, and who have carried on that agitation which, unhappily, has been so persistent in Ireland, who are entitled to special consideration in this matter, but those other persons to whom reference has been made by my hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone. Those who have been condemned under the Vaccination Act and in connection with the Salvation Army are the class of prisoners who chiefly command our sympathies, and who ought to receive the benefit of any modification which may be made in the law.

*MR. J. MORLEY (Newcastle): I think, Sir, after listening to the last quarter of the right hon. Gentleman' speech, we may feel that there is some good in the "National Protest" after all. The right hon. Gentleman said, before the end of the first part of his speech, that the proposal embodied in this Bill were not humanity but politics. Yes, but then afterwards he said he would assent to the principle of that proposal in the interests of humanity.

*MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly not.

*MR. J. MORLEY: The right hon. Gentleman says "certainly not," but after recapitulating the very ideas and arguments that were used below the Gangway this afternoon, he says with the utmost innocence "That is my view." If that is now his view, has it been his view for the last two years? Why, he now says it is perfectly natural that the wearing of the prison clothes should be objected to! But what did he say only about a week ago? He said that Mr. O'Brien, because he objected to his hair being cut and to wearing the prison clothes, was the victim of monomania. Now he is going to alter the whole system of prison discipline in order to get himself out of a scrape. Some of

his remarks with reference to my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby struck me as hardly worthy of him. He says that my right hon. Friend is playing the part of a bravo for gentlemen below the Gangway. Yes, but are there no bravos for you above the Gangway? Where do you go for your bravos? It is said that there is a conspiracy between us above the Gangway and hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. I should have thought that "conspiracy" was a very awkward word just now. The law of conspiracy is a two-edged sword, and who knows but that in the chances and changes of this mortal life we may yet live to see—perhaps before long—the First Lord of the Treasury himself coming down to this House and using the very arguments which we are using this afternoon on behalf of some of his very oldest friends. The Chief Secretary quoted the Report of the Commission of, I think, 1874, and said that those who signed that Commission, including my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby, ought not to make any discrimination in favour of the perpetrators of foul crime. In that we all agree. But in the case of the prisoners at Miltown-Malbay, who were sentenced because they refused to give a glass of drink to policemen who did not want a glass of drink, will the right hon. Gentleman contend that they were guilty of a foul crime? Does he say that Mr. Harrington, who was guilty of nothing more serious than the publication of reports of the meetings of a suppressed branch of the Land League, committed a foul crime? If so, would he have had the alternative of escaping his punishment by engaging not to commit it again? In the matter of Dr. Barr, I am persuaded that my right hon. Friend did not say one word too much. Why, the Home Secretary himself the other day admitted, in answer to a question, that he had rebuked Dr. Barr and requested him not to repeat his offence. The right hon. Gentleman says that this Bill is brought in to make political capital. Now, this Bill I hope, and assume, is going to be supported by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham, because he said the other day that he would submit that on the whole question it was a fair subject for discussion, whether the gentleman, or the majority of those gentlemen, convicted under the Crimes Act should or should not be treated as first-class misdemeanants, and he added—

> "If a Bill or Resolution were brought before the House dealing with the subject, I confess I should be inclined to support it."

Of course, it is not to be supposed that my right hon. Friend made that remark with a view to make political capital. I am perfectly sure that on this side of the House, almost as much as on the opposite side, there is a feeling of repugnance to the policy which the right hon. Gentleman, has been carrying out. [*Cries of* "No" *on the Ministerial side.*] Someone says "No" but if there had not been that repugnance we should not have had these philosophic doubts of the right hon. Gentleman. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman opposite does not understand the Bill. I almost think he cannot have read it, because he said, and said truly, it would be absurd to treat the perpetrators of certain violent acts with special favour. But these acts are acts that are dealt with under a provision in the last line of the Bill. The Bill says that this favour is not to be extended, unless it is declared and adjudged that the offender has been guilty of assault, or attempted assault, on the person. And if these words are not enough, what would be easier than to put into the Bill a proviso meeting that case? You have only to except from the Bill the third sub-section of the 2nd section. The right hon. Gentleman referred to another class of cases, but these I would point out were cases tried before a jury; and what we ask is, that as by a special Act we have referred special conduct to a special tribunal, there is a *primâ facie* case for treating the prisoners convicted under that Act in a special manner. The right hon. Gentleman did not think fit to deal with a single one of the most powerful arguments brought forward by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, who put a case the force of which was irresistible. The right hon. Gentleman did not answer the challenge as to the directness of connection between speeches inciting to crime and the perpetration of murder and outrage. The right hon. Gentleman has gone off too much on the question of the difficulty of defining a political prisoner. No definition is wanted of political prisoners. All that we want is an amendment of the administration of this special and

exceptional Act, so that offenders against its provisions shall not be treated as if they were criminals under the ordinary law. The right hon. Gentleman did not say what course he and his friends are going to take as to the Amendment. It may not be a Parliamentary expression, but I should think that a more dishonest Amendment was never brought before the House. There is no reason, because Salvationists or Vaccinationists deserve exceptional treatment, why we should refuse this afternoon to meet what is an admitted grievance. If you do not approve the Bill, why do you not move a direct negative? The Government will take what course they please. These promises of the right hon. Gentleman are not to me very satisfactory, because I am afraid he will be apt to be content with an authority which will not satisfy the House, and certainly not us who sit on this side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman has refused to bring in a Bill to satisfy hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. I regret that refusal for the sake of the House, and for the sake of Ireland. If you had supported this Bill you would not have satisfied only hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, but you would have also satisfied the conscience and the deeply-stirred feeling of the great bulk of your own countrymen on both sides in politics.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes 193; Noes 259: Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 17.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

It being after half-past Five of the clock, and Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

TEXTILE FABRICS (SIZING AND STEAMING) BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire inte the subject of Sizing and Steaming in the weaving of Textile Fabrics, with especial reference to the conditions of the trade and the health of the operatives engaged therein."—(*Viscount Cranborne.*)

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I appeal to the noble Lord to delay this Motion for a fortnight. I do so at the request of parties who are interested, and who are about to hold a conference in London. They wish to meet hon. Members who take an interest in this matter.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): I have neither the wish nor the power to resist the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman. I may explain that we have taken action on a numerously signed petition. We wished to know what answer we could give to our constituents on this important subject, and we also desired to form public opinion. But I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not insist on a delay for so long a period as a fortnight, as the conference is to take place next Thursday, and it will be sufficient, perhaps, if the Motion is postponed till that evening.

MR. MUNDELLA: No; I must ask for a fortnight.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I hope the postponement for a fortnight will be agreed to, as there is a very strong feeling on this subject in the districts affected.

Debate adjourned till Thursday 21st March.

MOTIONS.

DEEP SEA OYSTERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Bill to remove the restrictions on the Sale of Deep Sea Oysters, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cozens-Hardy and Mr. Colman.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 157.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—QUESTION.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I wish to ask whether the Supplementary Estimates will be taken to-morrow?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government propose to take the Navy Estimates, in accordance with the arrangement made a few days ago. It is desirable that these arrangements should be adhered to. I shall have to ask the House at 3 o'clock to-morrow to suspend he 12 o'clock Rule, in order to make it quite certain that the Government will get the Votes which are necessary for

the service of the country. I hope it will not be necessary for the House to sit past midnight; but the circumstances are such that we must provide for anything which may arise to prevent the Votes being taken before 12 o'clock. I trust, therefore, the House will assent to the arrangement I propose to make.

*Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I understand the right hon. Gentleman only proposes to take business till 1 o'clock. I heard just now something said about Report of Supply being taken as the first Order of the day to-morrow. No one knows how long that would last. I suggest the Votes should be taken first. There is no urgency in regard to the Report of Supply, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will only suspend the Rule until 1 o'clock.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: If the right hon. Gentleman can give me an assurance that the public business will be completed, I shall be very glad to accept his suggestion. I do not desire to keep the House sitting one moment longer than is necessary. No attempt will be made to make progress with the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. CHILDERS: I suggested to the right hon. Gentleman to take the Navy Votes first, and not the Report of Supply.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: It must be obvious that the business of the country must be carried through; but if the right hon. Gentleman can assist the Government in getting the Votes by a certain time I shall be very glad to give him the assurance he desired.

*Mr. CHILDERS: So far as any influence I may have is concerned, I hope the Votes may be taken before 1 o'clock; but it would be extremely difficult to do that if Report is also taken. I repeat that there is plenty of time for the Report.

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I wish the right hon. Gentleman would point out where that time is to be found. I must entirely deny the accuracy of the right hon. Gentleman's calculation. If the right hon. Gentleman looks into the matter, he will find that unless the Government appropriate fully to themselves hon. Members' time on Tuesday next, which we should be very unwilling to do, Report of Supply must be taken before that day.

*Sir R. N. FOWLER (London): I think it is useless suspending the Rule till 1 o'clock, as, if there is a fixed hour, it puts it in the power of any hon. Member to talk out the business of the House, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite cannot answer for every Member on his side of the House.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I should like to see the business of the House conducted with more smartness. The Government do not possess the confidence of the country, and Members on my side are not anxious they should continue to exercise the power of government. If there is not time now to get through the business, it is because the Government have not called Parliament together at an earlier date.

Dr. TANNER (Cork, Mid): I should like to take this, the first opportunity I have had, of asking if the Government still stick to the statement made in this House the other night as regards my treatment in Scotland Yard? I understand that last Friday week it was stated that I had received most luxurious treatment at the hands of the Government, and I now ask whether the Government are prepared to substantiate or deny that statement?

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman must be aware that I have no personal knowledge whatever of the circumstances which he refers to. I understand that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary made his statement on information supplied to him by the Chief Commissioner of Police.

Dr. TANNER: As I think it is in the interest of the House that the whole truth on this matter should be ascertained, I beg to give notice that I will put a question regarding it on the Paper.

PARNELLISM AND CRIME.

Mr. J. G. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government propose to prosecute the firm of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Sons for publishing libels?

No Answer was given.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 16.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 22.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 14th March, 1889.

EARL OF LUCAN'S CLAIM TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND.

Ordered and Directed, That a Certificate be sent by the Clerk of the Parliaments to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland, stating that the Lord Chancellor of the United Kingdom has reported to the House of Lords that the right of the Earl of Lucan to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland has been established to the satisfaction of him the said Lord Chancellor; and that the House of Lords has ordered such Report to be sent to the said Clerk of the Crown in Ireland: And it is hereby also Ordered, That the said Report of the said Lord Chancellor be sent to the Clerk of the Crown in Ireland.

The Lord Bishop of Oxford—Took the Oath for the first time.

LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT (LIGHT) RAILWAY BILL.

The Second Reading, which stood appointed for this day, was put off to Thursday, the 28th inst.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (ACTON, &c.) BILL. (NO. 19.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Boards for Acton, Chiswick, and Liverpool to put in force the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and the Acts amending the same—Presented by The Lord President (*V. Cranbrook*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

H.M.S. "SULTAN."

LORD COLVILLE OF CULROSS: Seeing the noble Lord who represents the Admiralty in his place, I wish to ask whether he can give the House any information as to the condition of Her Majesty's ship *Sultan?*

LORD ELPHINSTONE: We received the following telegram at the Admiralty this afternoon:—

"Malta, 1.30.—Heavy north-east gale, with high sea, forced *Sultan* off rock. She sank at 11.45. Upper works visible above water. No loss of life. Ships returning into harbour."

That is really, my Lords, all the information we have. We are anxiously waiting despatches, but at present we have no fresh information.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILLS—STANDING ORDER, NO. 128.—OBSERVATIONS.

EARL BEAUCHAMP, in rising to call attention to the Return presented to the House last September, relating to the Payment of Interest out of Capital said: My Lords, this Return, although small in size, is, I think, very instructive, and I should be very sorry indeed, if it were consigned to that insatiable gulf of oblivion to which so many Parliamentary papers find their way. My Lords, the question of the payment of interest out of capital is not a new one. In the year 1847, after the panic which followed the great extension of our Railway system and the Railway Legislation which took place just before that time, a Standing Order was passed by your Lordships, which remained in force for a great number of years, providing that

* RETURN (ordered 2nd August, 1888) of the cases in which Payment of Interest out of Capital has been sanctioned under Standing Order 128, as altered 27th May, 1886, with the amounts of Capital authorized by the several Acts, and stating the result as far as known (No. 247).

in every Bill dealing with Railways a clause should be inserted prohibiting the payment of interest out of capital. I will not now argue that question, because I think it will be generally admitted, even by those who a few years ago persuaded your Lordships to alter the practice and to accommodate it to the altered Standing Orders of the House of Commons, that the Standing Order in question was wise and sound, and that it had a beneficial effect upon Railway legislation. What was contended was that the acceptance of the Standing Order which prohibited the payment of interest out of capital hampered and crippled Railway enterprize and prevented the carrying out of many useful undertakings, undertakings which were useful in a public sense, and also useful as a means of affording employment, and that in consequence it was in some way a restraint upon labour. Various Railway Companies endeavoured in the September of 1882 to obtain from Parliament a relaxation of that Standing Order, but in that year the attempt was unsuccessful. The question was allowed to slumber for some time, but after various phases of agitation, your Lordships, in the year 1886, sanctioned the alteration, and brought your practice into conformity with what had been adopted by the House of Commons and recommended by a small Committee of your Lordships' House. That variation did not go to the extent of sweeping away the restriction upon payment of interest out of capital, but it gave power to the Committees, under certain stringent conditions, to allow such payment. My Lords, it has proved to have been a mistake to suppose that this alteration would enable Railway Companies who had been struggling with financial difficulties to triumph over them, and to embark on a successful career, which would be profitable to themselves, and also afford occupation to deserving men who were unemployed. I wish to draw your Lordships' attention to this fact—that it was contended that the alteration of the Standing Order would stimulate enterprize, and provide employment for labour; and, therefore, I will ask your Lordships to consider what has been the result. Have the results been commensurate with the expectations prophesied by those who came to your Lordships? Have the results been large or small? Now, the Return submitted to your Lordships is a

> "Return of cases in which Payment of Interest out of Capital has been sanctioned under Standing Order 128, as altered 27 May, 1886, with the amounts of capital authorized by the several Acts, and stating the result as far as known."

I invite your Lordships to consider what have been the consequences of this alteration as tested by experience. Has it produced financial ease in the case of Railway Companies who found it difficult to raise their capital? Has it afforded employment to the unemployed, or has there been no such effect? The first railway I find mentioned here is the Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway. The Bill for that undertaking was passed in 1882, when the old Standing Order was in force, and the power to pay interest out of capital was not granted to this Company till 1885. Their authorized capital was £8,100,000, and after deducting £1,500,000 for the capital applicable to the Canal part of the undertaking, there was left for the Railway £6,600,000. The amount of capital which they were authorized under the Standing Order to apply to payment and interest was £660,000. The Return is "nothing done as yet"; so that in that case the alteration has had no result at all. The next is the Bridgewater Railway, which obtained this power in 1886. The capital authorized was £135,000; and the amount of interest capital sanctioned was £10,000 at 4 per cent. The note is, "No capital raised as yet." A similar remark is appended to the next two instances, the Brighton, Rottingdean, and Newhaven Direct Railway (share capital £180,000, interest capital £20,000), and the Burnley, Clitheroe, and Sabden Railway (share capital £168,000, interest capital £15,000). The next case is the Dore and Chinley Railway, in which £70,000 was authorized to be paid as interest out of capital, and the note is: "Company unable to raise capital. Powers for construction transferred to Midland Railway Company by Midland Railway Act of this Session." Then, with regard to the Halifax, High Level, and North and South Junction Railway, with a share capital of £320,000, and £16,000 al-

lowed for interest capital, the vote is: "All capital required for construction of line has been raised as ordinary capital on payment of interest during construction, at 3½ per cent on the amount from time to time paid up on the shares. As regards this Railway there is an agreement with a larger Company to work the line, and under this agreement a certain income is secured, and there is no doubt that the fact of the existence of the agreement in the case of this Railway had considerable influence in causing the capital to be raised." In the next two cases (the Harrow and Stanmore Railway, share capital £60,000, interest capital £6,000; and the Lynton Railway, share capital £83,000, interest capital £5,000) the note is "No capital raised as yet." The Return as to the Manchester Ship Canal, with the large share capital of £8,000,000, of which £752,000 was allowed to be treated as interest capital, is, "Capital in course of being raised." As your Lordships know, that is a very large and important undertaking. It went through a very severe sifting both in your Lordships' House and in the House of Commons. and it only passed at the end of the third investigation, when Parliament had thoroughly satisfied itself of the soundness of the undertaking. There was, no doubt, some difficulty at first in raising the capital; but I am bold enough to say that, whether the Standing Order had been altered or not, the money would have been forthcoming. With regard to almost all the other cases, we find that the alteration has been unavailing. The Return as to the Nottingham Suburban Railway is—"The promoters state that, in consequence of the power to pay interest out of capital, the directors were able to place the whole of the amount on favourable terms, and it is probable that, without power to pay interest out of capital, greater expense than the outlay for interest would have had to be incurred in issuing the capital, and there would still have remained room for doubt as to the success of the efforts to place it." In the case of the Portsmouth and Hayling Railway, "No capital yet raised." In that of the Rotherham and Bawtry Railway, "Company unable to raise capital; applying this Session for power to abandon;" the South Hampshire Railway and Pier, "No capital has been raised, and the powers have lapsed;" the Uxbridge and Rickmansworth Railway, "No capital has been raised under the Act of 1887. What little capital has been raised has been raised under the Act of 1881, which did not contain power to pay interest out of capital during construction;" the Barry Dock and Railways, "Capital raised. Half had been raised without the power to pay interest. The promoters state that the power has enabled them to raise the further capital at a less cost for interest than the probable loss on discount without it." Then, as to the Brighton, Rottingdean, and Newhaven Direct Railway, and the Clyde, Ardrishaig, and Crinan Railway, "No capital raised as yet." I need not go into the other cases; but I think it is abundantly clear that the alteration of the Standing Order has not produced that beneficent effect which was expected, and, so far from having tended to induce investors to put their money in these undertakings, it has not had that effect. If this experiment had fulfilled the predictions with which it was ushered into existence, my criticism would have taken a very different form, but I think your Lordships will see that we have abandoned a very strong and very sound position with regard to paying interest out of capital, without having derived any corresponding advantage. We have not stimulated railway enterprize; we have not afforded employment to the unemployed, and the visions which were dangled before the eyes of the Legislature have in no sense been fulfilled.

*THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS: My Lords, the question to which the noble Lord has drawn attention is one, undoubtedly, of very considerable importance. Carrying the Return to which the noble Lord has referred up to the present time, I am afraid it would not disclose any circumstances which would go to confirm the idea that the modification of the Standing Order would have any large influence upon the construction and development of railway and similar work. The noble Lord rightly pointed out that the three prominent Bills which were before the House when the Standing Order was modified were the Regent's Canal Bill, the Dore and Chinley Railway Bill, and the Manchester Ship Canal Bill. So

far as I can ascertain, the Regent's Canal scheme remains exactly where it was, and nothing whatever has been done to pay interest out of capital. In the case of the Dore and Chinley Railway, the power to pay interest has been abandoned, and the line has been transferred to one of the large existing companies to make with their own money. In the case of the Manchester Ship Canal Bill the capital has been raised. How far that may be due to the prevalence of an opinion that this large undertaking would pay in itself, or how far it may have been influenced by a concession of the payment of interest out of capital, it is impossible for me to give any opinion; but, looking through all the cases mentioned in the Return and to others which have since occurred, it does not appear to me that the public are more inclined to invest in companies which have the power to pay interest out of capital than they are to invest in similar companies which do not possess that power. In fact, unless the public are satisfied that the line or the scheme has a good prospect in itself, they will not be tempted to make an investment by the circumstance that interest may be paid to them out of capital. During last Session a considerable number of applications were made before Committees for power to pay interest. That power was conceded in the case of seven companies, and yet I believe I am right in saying that the power has not been exercised in a single instance. In the present Session applications for similar powers is made in the case of 18 companies, most of them minor concerns. In two or three cases these companies have been before Parliament more than once for variations of their lines, extension of time, or similar applications. In one or two cases the parties are again before Parliament for further changes of their lines or extension of time, having in the meantime raised no capital whatever. Whether or not the alteration of your Lordships' Standing Orders will tend to the good of the country by further development of undertakings giving large employment in their construction, I think no opinion can yet be formed. In the working of the Standing Order two questions have arisen—one, whether the concession of the power to pay interest out of capital should be granted at all; and, secondly, the rate at which it should be granted. As regards the first, it will be seen from the number of cases granted that the matter has been carefully watched by Committees of both Houses, and as regards the rate of interest, the principle adopted has generally been this:—the Committees have allowed the maximum of 4 per cent, practically 1 per cent above the interest on Government Stock, but they have only conceded that rate where the Company seeking the power have in its Acts agreements or arrangements with other existing companies which give a reasonable prospect of a somewhat similar rate being a permanent rate, so that when the construction is finished investors shall not be subjected to any great fall of their rate of interest. In cases where there have been no such agreements the interest has been fixed at 3½ or 3 per cent. One curious feature in the Returns is that the rate of interest does not appear to have materially acted on the question of raising or not raising the capital. One question, no doubt, will present itself to the Committees this Session with regard to the rate of interest. The rate of interest of the Government funds has been reduced, and the question may arise whether the maximum rate of interest should still be given—whether, in fact, 4 per cent is not too high a rate to continue? Having regard, however, to the care that has been shown by the Committees in investigating the cases and limiting the cases in which the power should be given, I think your Lordships may safely leave the matter where it is until the completion of the works and the expiry of the powers of the Acts which were sanctioned in 1886 and in 1887. When that time has expired, then, and not before, a fair opinion may be formed as to the effect which this power of payment of interest out of capital has had. Judging from the cases which have come before me, there is no doubt that very great care will have to be exercised in selecting and sifting out cases this Session, to avoid giving that power to mere speculative schemes which have no real basis except the possible hopes of speculators of some financial gain from the operation, irrespective of the real earnings of the particular scheme, and on the other hand not to avoid giving, where the im-

The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos

portance of the scheme, not merely to particular localities, but to a large district of the country, was undoubted, every facility consistent with the Standing Orders of their Lordships' House to encourage the development and construction of such undertakings.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 14th March, 1889.

COLONIZATION.

Ordered, That an Address be presented for Copy of the Correspondence from Colonial Governments in answer to the Memorandum by the Parliamentary Colonization Committee of the 1st day of May, 1888, be sent to Colonial Governments for their consideration and opinion, through Lord Knutsford, during the Session of 1888.—(*Mr. Seton-Karr.*)

QUESTIONS.

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the case of John Mackinnon, of Barra, a prisoner on bail, who had to undertake a difficult and dangerous journey, occupying four days, in order to record a formal plea of "not guilty" at Lochmaddy; whether he has received representations as to the great inconvenience to which inhabitants of the Outer Hebrides are exposed through the arrangements of Pleading Diets under the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act; and, whether he will consider the propriety of modifying present arrangements?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. ROBERTSON, Bute): My attention has been called to the case of John Mackinnon, and a representation has been made to me of the inconvenience to which he was subjected. With reference to the second part of the question, I must remind the hon. Member that Pleading Diets in Sheriff Court cases not tried summarily (of which this was one) have existed for many years; the only change under the recent Statute being, that now the plea can be taken by the nearest Sheriff Substitute, instead of by the Sheriff of the Court where the case would eventually be tried. In the representation made to me this change is stated to be a great improvement—which it certainly is. It is, however, undoubtedly a hardship that such long distances should have to be traversed if it can possibly be avoided, and I shall consider whether any modification of the existing arrangements can be made.

THE LONDON POLICE COURTS.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in reference to a portion of his answer of 7th December last, to the effect that the employment and payment of female officers for female prisoners at the London Police Courts had been already sanctioned, and that steps were being taken to appoint competent attendants; at how many of the 16 London Police Courts have such attendants been appointed; whether there were in each of these cases not merely a searcher but a female attendant, or police matron, in charge throughout the day and night of all female prisoners; if not, will Recommendation No. 10 of the Committee which was presided over by Mr. Justice Wills, and which reported in April, 1888, to the effect that "besides the male officer in charge of the prisoners, there should be a female officer in charge, under him of the female prisoners," be effectually carried out without further delay; also, whether he will call for Reports from the Metropolitan and City Police Courts and the other Petty Sessional Courts showing in detail how far each recommendation of Sir Alfred Will's Committee has been adopted and carried into effect; and, whether he will lay a Return, tabulating the contents of such Reports, upon the Table of the House?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART WORTLEY, Sheffield, Hallam): In answer to the question of the right hon. Baronet I have to say that at the following six out of the 14 Metropolitan Police Courts—namely, Bow Street, Worship Street, Clerken-

well, Westminster, Marylebone, and the Thames—female attendants have been appointed. Appointments will be very shortly completed at Southwark, Hammersmith, Wandsworth, Greenwich, Woolwich, Dalston, and Lambeth. With regard to Marlborough Street the Secretary of State is still in communication with the learned chief magistrate with a view to overcome certain structural difficulties in the way of accommodation which have hitherto existed at that Court. I may remind the right hon. Baronet that the services of these female attendants are only required during the day, as no prisoners are detained in the Court cells after the rising of the Court at 5 in the afternoon. Prisoners who are remanded from the Police Courts are taken to prison for the night. With regard to the second question I may say that no useful purpose at this moment would be gained by the production of such a Return as is there described. Correspondence with the authorities of local courts outside the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State is still proceeding. In several cases the requirements of the Committee, which were communicated by Home Office circular, have been satisfactorily carried out and have been approved. In others correspondence aimed at securing improved accommodation is still pending, which the Secretary of State has every reason to hope will in like measure be successful.

BALLYCOTTON PIER.

MR. LANE (Cork County, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, what had been the cost of the inspection and report upon the Ballycotton Pier; what was the probable cost of the alterations and repairs recommended therein; and, when would those repairs be executed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): The total cost of inspection and report will be £330 3s. 10d. I have not yet received an estimate for the works recommended by Mr. Barry, but if the hon. Member desires I will inquire and get the information.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): Arising out of the answer of the hon. Gentleman, may I ask whether it is proposed that the money required for these repairs and alterations is to be provided by a Special Vote or economized out of the funds already pledged to other piers, and notably that of Ballyhalbert, in County Down?

MR. LANE: Is it not possible to make the contractors who have been paid £20,500 for the erection of this pier responsible for any expense incurred in consequence of the contract not having been properly performed?

MR. JACKSON: I do not think the contractors will admit that there has been any fault on their part, and I should not like to express an opinion on the subject. In answer to the question of my hon. and gallant Friend, I think I may assure him that the money will not be found at the expense of the harbour he is interested in.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): How soon will the Report of the inspection be circulated?

MR. JACKSON: That is a question for the printers.

EXCESSIVE HOURS OF LABOUR.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the inquest on the death of Stephen Gurr, a platelayer, in the employ of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, whilst fog-signalling, on the evening of 1st of January, at Norwood Junction; whether the evidence showed that Gurr went on duty at 7 a.m. on Monday, 31st December, went off at 5 p.m., was sent on duty again at 7.30 p.m., remained on duty till 7 a.m. on Tuesday, 1st January, went on duty again at 1 p.m., having only had 6 hours off duty after having been on duty 21½ hours out of the preceding 24; and, whether any inquiry has been held by the Board of Trade, or any representation made to the Company by the Board of Trade, that such excessive hours of labour involve the greatest danger to the fog-men, and also to the trains, and that it is their duty to provide a larger staff for fog-signalling, and relieve the fog-men more frequently?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): My attention has been called to the accident to Stephen Gurr, referred to, and the hours for which the unfortunate man had been on duty are undoubtedly very long. A correspondence

has taken place between the Board of Trade and the Company.

MR. CHANNING: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table the correspondence on the subject between the Board of Trade and the Railway Company?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Yes.

MR. CHANNING: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to lay on the Table any assurances which may have been given by the railway company as to their future action on the subject?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: That hardly arises out of my answer, but I will consider the matter.

EMIGRATION TO THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary for the Colonies whether he was aware that large numbers of emigrants are leaving Portsmouth for the Argentine Republic; and whether it was possible for the Emigrants' Information Office to circulate, for the guidance of intending emigrants to South America, accurate information as to soil, climate, probabilities of employment, wages, and cost of living in the Argentine Republic?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): The increase of emigration to South America is referred to in the last Report on Emigration, and has been continued during the present year, as stated by my right hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in his reply to a question in the House on the 28th of February. Large numbers of inquiries with regard to the Argentine Republic are received at the Emigrants' Information Office, and are usually referred to the London Information Office of the Argentine Government, unless they can be answered from such Consular and other Reports as are received through the Foreign Office. The instructions given to the Committee of the Emigrants' Information Office confine them to the British Colonies, and their staff is so limited that their present work, to be done thoroughly, gives full occupation. It is undoubtedly most desirable that accurate information should be given as to foreign countries to which British emigrants go, notably at the present time the Argentine Republic; but if the office is to undertake to do so, it must be strengthened and enlarged. The Committee do what they can at present in inviting and utilizing for individual inquirers any information bearing on emigration to any part of the world, while not issuing pamphlets as to any but British Colonies.

MR. BRADLAUGH: I believe that the information already given by the Office has been of great advantage to emigrants, and prevented many of them from going to places where they could not get employment. Will the Government recommend some additional outlay, for the purpose of extending this information?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I should be glad to do it, but I am afraid it is a question for the Treasury. We have no money.

MR. BRADLAUGH: As the Secretary to the Treasury is in his place, and has heard the answer of the Under Secretary, may I ask whether an application to the Treasury for money for this purpose by the Colonial Office would receive his support?

MR. JACKSON: I am quite sure that the Treasury will give the most respectful and earnest consideration to any application that may be made to it.

THE SHERIFF DEPUTE OF CAITHNESS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate whether it is the case that Mr. Thoms, Sheriff Depute of Caithness, while sitting on the bench at Wick and dealing with a case, Weir against Weir, which had been appealed to him from the Sheriff Substitute, abstracted 18 pages or thereby of the written evidence taken before the Sheriff Substitute in the case; whether Mr. Thoms cast said pages aside and destroyed them, stitching up the remaining evidence; if so, was Mr. Thoms entitled to act in such a way; and, if he was not so entitled to act, what steps does the Lord Advocate intend taking in the circumstances?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON requested the hon. Member to put down the Question for another day.

MR. CALDWELL: I will repeat it on Monday.

FAIR RENTS.

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if applications for the fixing of fair rents in the union of Londonderry have been waiting since January, 1888; and when will a Sub-Commission sit in Londonderry to hear these cases?

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The Land Commissioners inform me that it has not yet been found possible, owing to the number of cases pending, to list any cases in the Union of Londonderry where the applications have been received since January, 1888. A Sub-Commission sat in that part of the Union which is situated in the County of Donegal last January, and for that part of the Union situated in the County of Londonderry last November. The Land Commissioners are not at present in a position to state when there will be another sitting in the Union.

BOYCOTTING A BANK.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the following paragraph in the *Dublin Mail* of the 9th inst:—

"It is stated that the Ballyshannon people are desirous of boycotting the Provincial Bank in that town for accepting, as treasurer, subscriptions to the Martin Memorial Fund. The manager has been warned that if the directors support him in this it will be at 'a considerable sacrifice.'"

If there is any truth in the statement; and, what steps the Government intend to take to protect the Bank thus threatened?

*MR. MADDEN: I understand that Nationalists in Ballyshannon objected to a list of subscribers to the Martin Memorial Fund being exhibited in the bank, and that an article on the subject which appeared in the local Nationalist paper stated that it was a political matter, and that unless the placard were immediately withdrawn steps would be taken to prove that partizan displays are not remunerative to banking establishments. I am informed that the list was subsequently removed at the request of the gentleman who inaugurated the movement. The manager of the bank continues to act as treasurer, and no objection appears to be raised by any person to his so acting.

FATHER M'FADDEN.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether, at the trial of Father M'Fadden and others at Letterkenny on Thursday, the 7th instant, the accused were passed to their places in Court before a number of constables who were placed in Court, one of them having a note-book in hand which he was using; whether, on the attention of the magistrates being drawn to this by the counsel for the accused, Mr. Hamilton, R.M., asked District Inspector Stevenson whether the constables so placed and acting were witnesses proposed to be examined by the Crown for the purpose of indentifying any of the accused, and that this was admitted to be so by District Inspector Stevenson; whether Mr. Hamilton thereupon ordered that the constables should be sent out of Court, whereupon about 30 of them left it; whether, some time subsequently, one of these men, Constable Boyle, was again in Court, and was again ordered by the magistrate to leave it, which he did; and, whether he will give such instructions to those in charge of the Constabulary as will prevent similar proceedings in future?

*MR. MADDEN: The Constabulary authorities report that owing to the large number of prisoners who were being brought up before the magistrates on the occasion in question, four constables were placed for the purpose of noting the prisoners, with a view to prevent subsequent confusion as regards those who might be discharged by the Court and those retained in custody. On the application of counsel for the defence that all witnesses should be put out of Court being acceded to, these constables at once left with about 20 others who were also witnesses. Afterwards Constable Boyle having been sent for came back into Court, but upon counsel objecting to his presence he at once left, having been there for a few moments only.

IRELAND—POLICE PASSES.

MR. JOHN ELLIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ire-

land, whether a number of "passes" have been issued, in the following form, by a Sergeant of Constabulary in the Gweedore district: "Please let bearer ——— pass. Owen Mahoney, Sergeant R.I.C. Date———," in default of possession of one of which the people of the district are unable to pass along the roads or through the country at their pleasure; and, by whose authority this Police Sergeant is thus acting?

* MR. MADDEN: The Constabulary Authorities report that when the search for Mr. Martin's murderers was progressing Sergeant Mahoney gave passes as described to a few persons against whom he knew there was no suspicion, so that the inconvenience of stopping and examining them might be saved. It is, however, not the case that without these passes persons are unable to pass along the roads, or through the country, at their pleasure. The Sergeant acted on his own responsibility in giving the passes.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): Arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, may I ask if he is aware that on the following day police constables were placed in a position to overhear what was going on between the accused persons?

*MR. MADDEN: The hon. Member will observe that that is not a question arising out of my answer.

MR. WOODALL: I ventured to ask the question, because the Government have invited attention to the matter. I hope they will supply the information.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Did Mr. Hamilton, the resident magistrate, express his disapproval of this method of Government identification?

*MR. MADDEN: I have no information on that point.

IRELAND—THE MURDER OF INSPECTOR MARTIN.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, what number of houses have been forcibly entered by the constabulary in the district of Gweedore since the arrest of Father M'Fadden and the murder of District Inspector Martin on the 3rd February, and in how many cases was this done without warrant; what number of persons have been arrested in connection with these occurrences, how many of them have since been released, on whose direction was this done, how long had they been in continement, and against how many of them had there been sworn information; and, how many persons have been placed on their trial for complicity in the murder of Martin, and against how many of these has any information been sworn?

*MR. MADDEN: I must ask for notice of this question.

MR. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of how many prisoners have been arrested?

*MR. MADDEN: I cannot state the exact number, but I will inquire.

MR. MAC NEILL: They filled a special train consisting of five carriages.

COLONEL FORBES, R.M.

MR. SEXTON asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether Colonel Forbes, R.M. (Belfast) has received notice of his removal from Belfast; whether he is to be succeeded by a barrister; and whether this is with the view of carrying out one of the recommendations of the Belfast Riots Commission; and, if so, whether the other recommendations of the Commission will be adopted?

*MR. MADDEN: I believe Col. Forbes has either left or is about to leave Belfast. The gentleman who succeeds him is a barrister. This step was not taken with the view of carrying out one of the recommendations of the Belfast Riots Commission, though it is in accordance with the spirit of that recommendation.

MR. SEXTON: Was Colonel Forbes removed by his own desire or against his will.

MR. MADDEN: The hon. Member must give me notice of the question.

FORTIFICATION OF MILITARY PORTS.

VISCOUNT CURZON (Bucks, Wycombe) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he will give a Return showing the amount of money voted since 1885 for the defence, including fortifications and armament, of military ports, commercial ports, and coaling stations at home and abroad, the application of the money to the various localities, and the amount still required to be expended?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): If my noble Friend will look at

the Memorandum attached to last year's Estimates, of which a copy shall be sent him, I think he will find all the information he requires. But, if not, perhaps he will tell me what further information he desires.

THE PRIME MINISTER OF CASHMERE.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India whether it was a fact that letters of Lachmandus, late Prime Minister of Cashmere, have been discovered, showing a course of treason on the part of the Maharajah towards the Indian Government; whether these letters, amongst other things, reveal a design set on foot by the Maharajah of Cashmere to poison the British Resident; and whether, if this information is accurate, he is in a position to inform the House what steps the Indian Government propose to take under the circumstances?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir J. GORST, Chatham): The Secretary of State is advised that the Government of India attach very little importance to the intercepted letters.

THE DISTURBANCES AT SULYMAH.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government had now received official information respecting the Coroner's inquest held at Free Town, Sierra Leone, on the 1st February last, on the body of the Chief Gbanna Gombo, and other Papers showing what action, if any, has been taken by the local authorities with a view to investigation of the charges against the police officer, whose treatment of the Chief is alleged to have conduced to his death; and, whether he would furnish the House with further information as to the grounds of the Chief's arrest; also with copies of the official report of the Coroner's inquest of the 1st February; of the Governor's report on the subject; and of the order which has been issued to the Sierra Leone police respecting the use of handcuffs and avoidance of undue harshness in the conveyance of prisoners?

BARON H. DE WORMS: In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the Government have not received any further information beyond what I gave to the House on the 8th instant. The Secretary of State has, however, called for a full Report as to the circumstances alluded to, and the Papers will be included in the correspondence respecting the disturbances at Sulymah, which I intend to lay on the Table as soon as possible.

SIR R. FOWLER: When do the Government expect to receive the information?

BARON H. DE WORMS: I am unable to say precisely.

SHEERNESS DOCKYARD.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty what was the total estimated cost of the proposed dredging of the Medway, to allow of the largest men-of-war passing down the river at any high tide; and whether, when this work was completed, and Chatham Dockyard thus made more readily accessible, it will be practicable to close Sheerness Dockyard, thereby saving the establishment charges of the latter?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The estimated cost of dredging the Medway is £10,000. As the work carried on at Sheerness Dockyard is on the smaller classes of ships, the deepening of the Medway does not affect its present purpose. It is not considered desirable in Imperial interests to close Sheerness Dockyard.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) asked whether arrangements could not be made in connection with Sheerness Dockyard at a less cost than the proposed dredging of the Medway would involve by merely obviating the necessity for the undertaking?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The cost of dredging the Medway will, as I have stated, come to £10,000, but I am quite clear that no large dock accommodation at Sheerness could be obtained for that money.

ZULULAND—DINUZULU.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN (Cheshire) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies under what warrant, and issued by whom, is Dinuzulu now being detained in custody at Etshowe;

and whether Dinuzulu was removed from Natal to Etshowe under a warrant, the validity of which is under appeal?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Dinuzulu was removed to the borders of Natal under a warrant which the Supreme Court of that Colony had held to be valid, but the validity of which is now under appeal. On Dinuzulu reaching the borders of Natal, he was handed over to the Zululand Police, who doubtless were armed with a proper warrant from the Zululand authorities to enable the police to receive him. He is no doubt detained in custody under a proper warrant from those authorities, but the Secretary of State is not aware by what magistrates or other persons these warrants were issued.

ZULULAND—ZIBEBU.

MR. WALTER M'LAREN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Colonial Office will insist that the Zulu Chief Zibebu shall be put upon his trial for the murder of Umsutshwana; and, whether Mr. Richard Addison, who has been appointed a magistrate in Northern Zululand, and who is at present assisting in the prosecution of the Usutu Chiefs at Etshowe, formerly acted as one of Zibebu's lieutenants or "whitemen" during the conflicts between that chief and Cetshawayo's people?

BARON H. DE WORMS: It is proposed to proceed against Usibebu in respect of the transaction in question; but the proceedings have been delayed by reason of Usibebu having met with a serious accident, and by the fact that he is now attending as a witness before the Special Commission at Etshowe. I am assured that Mr. Richard Addison has at no time been with Usibebu.

IRISH EXTRA POLICE.

MR. LANE (Cork County, E.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland for what purpose a large body of extra police were marched into the town of Youghal on Friday the 8th instant; whether a similar force of extra police was sent there on the 8th March 1888; whether, when a similar force of extra police was marched into the town on the 8th March 1887, a riot took place, in which a civilian was killed by the police; and, whether in future steps would be taken to prevent the exasperation of the people?

MR. MADDEN: The Constabulary authorities report that an extra force of police was drafted into Youghal in 1888, and again in 1889, with a view to preventing a demonstration which there was reason to believe it was contemplated holding to commemorate the anniversary of the death of a civilian during the riot referred to in the third paragraph of the question. The authorities were of opinion that the holding of such a demonstration might lead to serious public disturbance, and possibly loss of life.

MR. LANE: Upon what grounds did the authorities anticipate such a demonstration when there had been no placard or advertisement issued in connection with it? As far as I am informed there never was any intention of holding a demonstration.

*MR. MADDEN: The authorities acted upon the information before them. It is not customary, in drafting police into a town where a disturbance is apprehended, to notify the fact by advertisements or placards.

MR. SEXTON: Did the authorities act on sworn information? If so, will the hon. Gentleman let me have a copy of it?

*MR. MADDEN: The right hon. Member must give notice of that question.

THE MERTHYR TYDVIL POLICE.

MR. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if it is true that Captain Lionel Lindsay, son of the present Chief Constable for Glamorganshire, has been appointed Superintendent of the Police at Merthyr Tydvil; whether the invariable practice hitherto has been to appoint the Superintendent of Police at Merthyr by promotion and seniority; and, whether he is aware that the report of the appointment of Captain Lindsay, a man of twenty-eight years of age, and having no connection with the police force of the county, over the heads of those who have spent their lives in the force has given rise to great dissatisfaction in the district?

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: Captain Lindsay has been appointed as a third class Superintendent. The Chief Constable states that hitherto he has been

able to select Superintendents from the county force, but not always by seniority. With regard to the third paragraph, my information is to the contrary. I am told that the appointment is popular in the force, and generally approved in the district.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea): May I ask whether this sort of family arrangement meets with the approval of the Government?

MR. T. ELLIS (Merionethshire): Has this gentleman had any experience whatever in regard to the Police Force of the county? Does he understand the Welsh language, and is there any power of revising the appointment?

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: I believe that Capt. Lindsay has had police experience in an adjoining county, but, speaking from memory and without notice, I cannot answer the Question positively. I know that he has had considerable experience in Egypt.

MR. T. ELLIS: How about the language?

*MR. STUART WORTLEY: I must have notice of that Question.

SHORT HOURS OF LABOUR.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked the Secretary to the Treasury whether, owing to the great loss the present short hours entail on carmen and others, he will cause to be altered the time of opening and keeping open of the customs and other bonded warehouses from eight o'clock a.m. until six o'clock p.m. in summer, and from nine o'clock a.m. until six o'clock p.m. in winter?

MR. JACKSON: I am not sure that the Government has power to order the opening of bonded warehouses. They are opened at eight in the morning and close at four in the summer. In winter they open at nine and close at four. There are strong objections to warehouses remaining open after dark, and if there were a general extention of the hours, increased cost would be entailed. I am not aware that there has been any general demand on the part of traders for an extension of the hours during which warehouses are kept open. I am informed, however, that in cases of special emergency an extension of time is granted on application, and I think this meets the necessities of the case.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON: What I alluded to was the Government bonded warehouses, and not private property. The closing of them at an early hour has been the cause of great loss to carriers and carmen.

THE SUGAR CONVENTION.

MR. FRANCIS STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, considering that by Article X. of the Sugar Convention it is provided that, in case a Colony should wish to retire separately from the Convention, a notification to that effect will be made to the contracting Powers by the Government of the Mother Country with the consequences shown in Article IX., it is intended that the withdrawal of a Colony from the Convention shall have the effect of entitling one of the Signatory Powers to notify its intention of retiring from the 1st of August of the following year; and, whether, in fact, the withdrawal of a Colony is to be treated as equivalent to the withdrawal of a signatory Power, except as regards the mode of notification?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Articles IX. and X. are capable of the interpretation suggested in the hon. Member's question. The question as to whether the withdrawal of a Colony is to be treated as equivalent to the withdrawal of a Signatory Power except as regards the mode of notification, is, in my view, one which would have to be decided by all the Signatory Powers, should the case arise, and is not one on which I should feel justified in expressing an opinion in anticipation.

THE NAVAL PROGRAMME.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, with reference to the Memorandum just published, explanatory of the financial proposals of the new programme, whether the House is to understand that, while the plan provides £3,054,000 more than is required for the programme of new construction in the Dockyards, an excess which, in the words of the Memorandum, "can be utilized in reducing the Estimates for 1892-3 and 1893-4," on the other hand it leaves almost the same amount, £2,864,000, to be provided by

Parliament during the two subsequent years 1894-5 and 1895-6, in respect of contract work already fully completed and paid for?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: My Memorandum was as follows:—

"This sum can either be utilized in laying down new vessels or in reducing the Estimates for 1892-3, 1893-4."

That new vessels will in those years be commenced is certain, and the amount available under our scheme for that purpose is sufficient to provide for the maintenance of the Fleet at the strength at which it will then stand. Unless, therefore, in the years 1892 to 1894 it is decided to abolish the Dockyards and to stop all shipbuilding, the supposition in the latter part of the Question is inaccurate.

IRELAND—FATHER BYRNE AND LIEUTENANT GEOHEGAN.

MR. THEOBALD (Essex, Romford) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if it is true that Father Byrne has issued a summons against Leutenant Geohegan for creating a disturbance by leaving the church during service after Father Byrne had directed the soldiers to disobey the commands of their officer; and, if so, on what grounds he can do so?

MR. MADDEN: I am informed that it is the case that a summons has been served on Lieutenant Geohegan at the suit of the Rev. Patrick Byrne, the grounds alleged being that the defendant had created a disturbance during the celebration of Divine service.

MR. SEXTON: In view of the danger involved in the offensive disturbance of a congregation in a place of religious worship may I ask if it is not expedient that orders to the troops to withdraw from a church should not be allowed to be given by every man or boy who happens to hold a commission in the Army?

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked whether the hon. and learned Gentleman would represent to the military authorities that it was inexpedient to send troops to a chapel where the priest, under pretence of religion, encouraged to acts of mutiny.

*MR. MADDEN: I believe the military authorities are able to attend to their own affairs without advice or assistance from me.

THE EDUCATION CODE.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, when the new Code will be laid upon the Table, and what time he proposes to give for its consideration?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford) said he hoped to lay the new Education Code on the Table on Tuesday or Wednesday next, and to give two months' time for its consideration.

COUNTY COUNCILS AND HIGHWAY BOARDS.

MR. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow) asked the President of the Local Government Board, whether, in cases of County Councils contracting with highway boards for the maintenance of main roads, County Councils can make Votes on Account to such highway boards?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It appears to me that the County Councils may make reasonable payments on account to the highway boards with whom they contract for the maintenance of main roads, provided that before they make such payments they have the report of their surveyor, which is required by sub-section 5 of section 11 of the Local Government Act, as to the roads having been properly maintained.

CITY OF LONDON VOLUNTEERS.

COLONEL LAURIE (Bath) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the opinion of a late Attorney General on the subject of the use of the Honourable Artillery Ground by the City of London Volunteers was given in his capacity as Law Officer of the Crown, or in an unofficial capacity, on the case as submitted by the Honourable Artillery Company?

*MR. BRODRICK: The opinion referred to was given, I believe, in an unofficial capacity.

ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY AT WOOLWICH.

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War whether the revised Code for the examination of candidates for entrance to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich has yet been adopted; and, if not, whether he can give any information as to the cause of the delay, and as to the date at which such revised Code will be made known and come into force?

*MR. BRODRICK: These Regulations are now completed, and will be issued immediately.

WIRE GUNS—THE LONGRIDGE SYSTEM.

CAPTAIN SELWYN (Cambridge, Wisbech) asked the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that General Maitland, Director of Ordnance Factories, stated on the 6th of October, 1888, at the annual dinner of the Royal Arsenal Foremen's Association—

"That a wire gun had been made by them on Mr. Longridge's plan which had beaten everything before it, having attained the extraordinary range of twelve and a-half miles."

Whether wire guns are made by Russia, France, and Germany on Mr. Longridge's plan, with great economy of time and money; whether he is aware that such wire guns are much stronger and more durable than the type of hooped gun now in use; whether such guns can be made in much shorter time (say one-third), and at much less cost (say one-eighth), than those in use at present; whether he is aware that Krupp, of Essen, have made several wire guns which have given brilliant results; but that they are not brought forward so long as orders are forthcoming for guns on the old system, in order that the enormous plant, which would be of no use for wire guns, may continue to be utilized; whether the same consideration influences the War Office; and, whether any, and, if so, what further trials or investigations of the Longridge system of making wire guns are in progress or contemplation?

*MR. BRODRICK: I am informed that the report of General Maitland's statement is not quite accurate. He said that a gun made in the Arsenal on a design of his own, but embodying Mr. Longridge's principle of using wire as an auxiliary to give strength, had produced the results described. I believe a gun has been made in Russia on some modification of Mr. Longridge's plans; and a few years ago some were made in France, but failed. I know of no others. Weight for weight the wire guns are stronger; but they are not more durable than hooped guns, as the bores wear out equally in either case. At present it is uncertain whether there is any gain either in time or cost from the use of wire; but it is hoped that some little saving may result. It will not, however, as regards either time or money, be in anything like the proportion suggested in the question. I am not aware that Mr. Krupp has made any wire guns, and certainly no consideration for existing plant would prevent the War Office from adopting them if otherwise found desirable. Several wire guns are being made for trial.

MR. HANBURY: May I ask whether any gun on Mr. Longridge's own plan has been tried?

*MR. BRODRICK: Yes, Sir; one was tested and burst on the first round.

CAPTAIN SELWYN: Was not that due to a flaw in the material, and not to any defect in the design.

*MR. BRODRICK: The information I have does not bear out the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member, but if he had seen the gun after it had burst, I do not think he would have wished any further experiments made in that direction.

RAILWAY RATES.

MR. GRAY (Essex) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that many railway companies have recently very considerably increased their rates and are now actually charging these increased rates; and, whether there are any means by which traders may be protected from the injury thus inflicted upon them?

SIR MICHAEL HICKS BEACH said: In consequence of the statements which have been publicly made in many parts of the country on this question, I communicated with the Chairman of the Railway Companies Association, who informs me that the railway companies made considerable alterations in rates at the end of last year in view of the operation of the

Railway and Canal Traffic Act; that these alterations were generally in the direction of cancelling obsolete through rates, and also rates which appeared open to objection on the ground of undue preference; that the cancelling of these special rates had the effect of raising the charges made for carriage, as the ordinary rates would then apply instead of the special rates; that since the 1st of January the railway companies have made no advances in their rates, and have no intention of doing so without complying with the provisions of the Act; and that if, by inadvertence, any rates have been charged in any district above those in force on the 1st January, the railway companies ask that the person so charged will communicate with the General Manager of the company making the increased charge, when the matter shall be put right.

AUSTRALIAN POSTAL RATES.

SIR G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): I beg to ask the Postmaster General how the penny charge for newspapers to Australia is distributed—that is, how much to the British Post Office for transit in Britain and sea passage to Australia; how much to the Continental countries for transit to Brindisi, and how much to the Australian Colonies for transit and delivery there; whether the postage from this country to India, both countries being in the Postal Union, is not dependent on the doctrine that Postal Union rates are not obligatory on services between one part of the British dominions and another; if so, why Australia is treated more favourably than India; and whether, now that he has arranged for a cheaper postage to Australia wholly by sea, he will arrange for a similar service to India?

*MR. RAIKES: Out of the penny charged on a newspaper for Australia the Post Office pays a halfpenny for transit through France and Italy, and about 1-12th of a penny to each intermediate Colony for such newspapers as have to be conveyed from Adelaide through one Colony or more to the Colony of destination. For mere delivery nothing is credited to the Colonies. I am not sure that I rightly apprehend the hon. Member's second question; but I may say that no such doctrine as he mentions has been admitted in fixing the rates of postage to British Colonies belonging to the Postal Union. As at present advised, and in view of the large sacrifice of revenue even at the present rates, I am not prepared to recommend a cheaper postage rate to India by the long sea route.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to give Notice that I shall take the earliest opportunity of drawing attention to the unfairness of treating Australia so much more favourably than India.

PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the objects of the Bill which has passed a Second Reading in Western Australia; whether it was introduced and promoted by the representatives of the British Government in that Crown Colony; and whether the Secretary of State proposes to ask the assent of the Legislative Council of Western Australia to a Bill for giving responsible government to the Colony, and transferring to the Colony the control of the lands of the temperate zone, before he consults the British Parliament in the matter?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The objects of the Bill, which has passed a Second Reading in Australia, are to provide the Colony with Parliamentary or "responsible" government in place of its present Constitution, which is not that of a Crown Colony, inasmuch as two-thirds of its Legislative Council are elected Members entirely independent of the Government. In accordance with the precedents in other Colonies, the Bill was introduced by the Colonial Secretary, and supported by the officers of the Government in the Legislative Council. The ordinary and constitutional course has been followed by legislation in the Colony in the first instance, and reserving to the Imperial Parliament the power of amending or rejecting the Colonial legislation.

SIR G. CAMPBELL: I beg to give notice that in consequence of the answer just given, I shall propose in the Vote on Account to strike out that portion of the Vote which provides for the salary of the Colonial Secretary.

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION REGISTERS.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that, in the precepts just issued by the Local Government Board to the Clerks of the Peace, the 20th October is fixed as the date on which the registers, both of County Electors and of Parliamentary Voters, are to be ready; that this only allows seven days from the 13th day of October, the date fixed by law for the completion of the revision of the Lists; that in these seven days the Clerks of the Peace will have to prepare for the Press, and get printed, corrected, indexed, and bound, sets of registers containing in many counties 100,000 names and upwards; and whether, in view of the great additional pressure, expense, and risk of errors that will be caused by such an arrangement, he will consider the advisability of further postponing the time for the publication of the registers?

*MR. RITCHIE: The period within which the revision of the Lists of Voters is to take place, and the date on which the Registers of County Electors and Parliamentary Voters are to be completed, are prescribed by sections 6 and 7 of the County Electors Act of last year. As the Order in Council to which reference is made merely refers to the dates prescribed by Statute, no alteration of the dates could be made without an alteration of the law. As the County Council Elections will be held on the same day as the Muncipal Elections — namely, the 1st of November—no longer time can be given except by altering the preliminary stages of registration, and I am advised that to alter the dates of those stages of registration, which under the existing system are conducted by overseers, would lead to great confusion and inaccuracy. I must, at the same time, point out that the revision of the Lists by the Revising Barristers is to commence as soon as possible after the 7th of September, and that the Clerks of the Peace are furnished with the Revised Lists as the revision proceeds, and that consequently the interval between the last day within which the revision must take place and the date of the completion of the Registers does not represent the period allowed for the printing of the Register. I may add that I hope to be able to arrange that the revision shall be promptly proceeded with by the Revising Barristers, so as to secure the completion of the revision at an earlier date than the latest period permitted by the Act.

IRELAND—THE PORTUMNA EVICTIONS.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any communication has been made on the part of the Irish Executive to the Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Coadjutor Bishop of Clonfert, or to Mr. Tener, Lord Clanricarde's agent, to the effect that the forces of the Crown will not be supplied for the purpose of certain evictions in the Portumna district, because the Government are not satisfied that the decrees obtained by the landlords are legal; whether the agent suggested that the constables guarding the emergency men in the several huts should accompany them to the proposed evictions; whether this suggestion was rejected; why evictions are facilitated by the Government in the Woodford district of Lord Clanricarde's estates, and are hindered in the Portumna district of that estate; what are the "particular circumstances" which led to the refusal to lend the forces of the Crown for evictions in the Portumna district; whether the correspondence between the Irish Executive, Lord Clanricarde, and Mr. Tener will be communicated to the House; and whether, as the Coadjutor Bishop has no objection to the publication of the correspondence between himself and the right hon. Gentleman, and as the right hon. Gentleman has drawn from the correspondence an inference affecting the Bishop which the Bishop does not accept, a copy of that correspondence will be laid upon the Table?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the first and sixth paragraphs of the question, there is no official correspondence of the kind, as the hon. Gentleman seems to suppose. The Divisional Commissioner reports that he told Mr. Tener, in reference to his application for protection in carrying out certain warrants both in Woodford and Portumna, that, as there was a doubt about the validity of the orders on which the

warrant was granted, it was not advisable to afford protection in the execution of them. The agent did make the suggestion contained in the second paragraph, but the Divisional Commissioner refused to accede to it. There is no ground for supposing that a distinction has been drawn in the action of the Government between Woodford and Portumna. The "particular circumstances" referred to in the fifth paragraph related partly to the extreme difficulty of assembling the necessary protection previous to the expiration of the decrees, partly to the doubt about the legality of the decrees. I do not know upon what grounds the hon. Gentleman expresses the opinions attributed in the last paragraph to Dr. Healy?

MR. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that statements have appeared in the public Press to the effect that the Bishop has no objection to the publication of the correspondence between himself and the right hon. Gentleman; and is the objection on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to the publication of the letters due to his unwillingness to disclose his share in the correspondence?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The statement to which the hon. Gentleman refers is one that I think came out in a leading article in the *Freeman's Journal.* I do not think it requires any answering.

THE PRISONER TRACY.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the statement that the prisoner Tracy, when in Castlebar Gaol, was denounced as an informer in the local Roman Catholic church, whether he is aware that there is but one Catholic church in the town of Castlebar, and that the parish priest, the Rev. Patrick Lyons, who is also chaplain to the prison, has declared the statement in question to be wholly untrue, and has challenged proof of it; whether, in consequence of the course pursued by him in regard to the public statement of Father Lyons, the reverend gentleman has indicated his intention of resigning the chaplaincy of Castlebar Prison; and whether, in view of subsequent information, he is now prepared to make any further statement on the subject?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My statement was that it was publicly announced in a local Roman Catholic chapel that the prisoner Tracy had turned informer. The chapel alluded to was Cappaduff, which is one of the localities in which there is evidence of the man having been actively engaged in the commission of crime.

RODDY'S HOTEL AND DERRY PRISON.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the statement that Father Stephens, a prisoner in Derry Gaol, has been prevented from obtaining his food from Roddy's Hotel, on the ground that the hotel people had entered into collusion to defeat the prison rules, whether it is true, as stated by Mr. William Roddy in the press, that the hotel messengers never saw any prisoner, and never went further than the outer hall of the prison where the food was delivered to a warder to be taken by him to the prisoner; and, if this be so, what is the explanation of the charge of collusion; and whether the order of exclusive dealing against this hotel will be further enforced?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Prisons Board inform me that they have no knowledge of what Mr. Roddy's statement in the Press is, but the Visiting Committee, after careful inquiry into surreptitious communications between Father M'Fadden and the managers of Roddy's Hotel, were fully satisfied that collusion existed of a sufficiently serious nature to oblige them to direct that the provisions for prisoners should not in future be received through that establishment. It is a matter of prison discipline that messengers from the establishment which provides prisoners with food are not admitted to the prisoners, but hand the supplies to a prison officer, whose duty it is to bring them to the prisoners. The Prisons Board have no intention whatever under the circumstances of allowing the proprietors of Roddy's Hotel to supply any of the prisoners in Londonderry Prison with food, having regard to the order of the Visiting Committee in this matter.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask if the prison authorities have stated or indicated the grounds upon which they came to the conclusion referred to? Does the

right hon. Gentleman not think that the owner of this hotel has been sufficiently punished already by being boycotted by all the Unionists in the district?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the decision has been arrived at by the Visiting Committee.

Mr. SWIFT MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask whether, in order to avoid all possibility of collusion, Father Stephens was in charge of and constantly attended by one warder, who was responsible for everything that occurred?

Mr. A. J. Balfour did not answer.

Mr. SWIFT MAC NEILL: I press for an answer.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I do not think the hon. Member is referring to the question which was asked from the notice paper.

Mr. SWIFT MAC NEILL: Yes, Sir, with all respect, my question does relate to that which has been already asked; I ask it in order to show that there was no possibility of collusion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I must ask for notice of the Question.

DUMBLANE CATHEDRAL.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College Division): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works, whether it is true, as stated in the *Glasgow Evening News*, that the Board of Works has sanctioned a scheme for the restoration of Dumblane Cathedral, that "the Cathedral has been, or is to be, conveyed from the Board of Works to the Board of Manufactures" in Edinburgh, and that the Board has been entrusted with the selection of plans, and is to undertake, after the restoration, to maintain the fabric in all time coming, in consideration of a cash payment of £3,000; if the statement be true, under what Act do the Commissioners of Works propose to hand over the control of an important National Monument to the Board of Manufactures; whether, considering that the interior of the ruined Cathedral has been used as a burial ground for more than a century, he has made any arrangement for safeguarding the burial rights of families interested in connection with the proposed restoration; and whether an opportunity will be given the House of discussing the proposed transfer of this national monument to the Board of Manufactures, a body which many consider not at all a proper body to be entrusted with this work?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. Plunket, Dublin University): The transaction is completed. It was completed because the matter had been gone into very fully, and I have received a very influential deputation, representing as far as I could ascertain all political parties and the peoples of the different religious persuasions. While it may seem a strange body to be entrusted with such work, I believe the Board of Manufactures is really as good a body for the purpose as can be found.

Dr. CAMERON: I beg to give notice that, as there is no other way of raising the question, I will do so by moving a reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary.

THE PONSONBY ESTATE.

Mr. LANE (Cork County, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, as the purchase of the Ponsonby estate by a London syndicate is now acknowledged by them, he will cause the local authorities in Cork to inquire into the alleged intention to evict 300 tenants on the estate, and to report to him upon the probable effect such evictions will have upon the peace and good order of a wide district?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware that there are any circumstances connected with the Ponsonby estate which require special inquiry on the part of the Government. I am aware that the Plan of Campaign has been in operation for two years upon the property, and it requires no profound knowledge of Ireland to be aware that under such circumstances evictions often become necessary, and that the peace and good order of the district may be seriously disturbed.

Mr. LANE: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that the unjust eviction of 300 families, and the peace of the whole of the South of Ireland, ought to be a matter of perfect indifference to ths Irish Government?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: An unjust eviction must always be a matter of regret to everybody; but I have no ground for believing that any unjust eviction is about to take place.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): Has the right hon. Gentleman seen a letter in the *Freeman's Journal*, in which Mr. Townsend, the agent of the syndicate who have bought the Ponsonby estate, declares that it is the intention of the syndicate to evict all tenants who do not purchase or otherwise settle on the terms proposed by the syndicate?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen that.

MR. LANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, while negotiations were being carried on to arrange a scheme of purchase under Lord Ashbourne's Act between Mr. Ponsonby and his tenants, the hon. Member for South Huntingdonshire (Mr. Smith-Barry) publicly declared that "Mr. Ponsonby would not settle with his tenants"; whether Mr. Brunker, acting for Mr. Ponsonby, telegraphed to Canon Keller two days subsequently that "Mr. Smith-Barry's statement was utterly unauthorized;" and whether Mr. Brunker wrote on the following day that he regretted he could no longer continue the negotiations which he had hoped he could have satisfactorily concluded?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no special knowledge of the matters referred to in the question. But from what I know of my hon. Friend the Member for South Huntingdonshire I feel perfectly certain he would never give the advice to any Irish landlord not to settle with his tenants upon reasonable terms.

MR. LANE: That is not an answer to my question. The question I have on the Paper is whether the hon. Member for South Huntingdonshire, in the midst of a settlement between this landlord and his tenants, declared publicly that Mr. Ponsonby would never settle with his tenants; and, whether, in a few days afterwards, it was ascertained that the hon. Member for South Huntingdonshire and some friends had combined and conspired to prevent Mr. Ponsonby settling with his tenants?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I told the hon. Member I had no special knowledge of the circumstances; but I took care to guard against the inference he appears to draw, that my hon. Friend would ever recommend any Irish landlord not to settle with his tenants.

MR. LANE: As this is a matter of great importance to the whole of the South of Ireland, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will cause some authority, say in Cork or in Dublin, to inquire into the circumstances under which this syndicate intervened between landlord and tenants, and bought the property over the heads of the tenants just as they were about to purchase from the landlord?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already stated that, as far as I understand the transaction, the position of the tenants is in no wise altered; they will now be in the same position relatively as before.

MR. LANE: I am sorry to press the matter, but it is so vitally important that I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he does not think the position of the tenants very much altered when, instead of being on the point of settling with their landlord—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That is clearly a matter of opinion, which cannot form the subject of a question.

MR. LANE: I beg to give notice that I will ask the question to-morrow.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, before he gave such a character to the hon. Member for South Huntingdonshire, he was aware that the hon. Gentleman was Chairman of a Committee, the principle of whose operations was to prevent settlements between landlords and their tenants.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no ground for thinking that at all. I believe my hon Friend is connected with a Committee, the object of which is to prevent the Plan of Campaign succeeding. I do not think the hon. Gentleman has given an accurate description of the Committee.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is it not a fact that in the City of Cork the hon. Member for South Huntingdonshire made use of the language ascribed to him?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am a very inadequate reader of the newspapers, and have not seen the report.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. COX (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the solicitor for the defence of the Irish Members

before the Special Commission has made an application to the Irish Office for information as to the whereabouts of the informer Cullinane, for the purpose of having him served with a subpœna to appear before the Special Commission; and what reply has been sent?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am given to understand that the letter from Messrs. Lewis on the subject referred to in the question was received at the Irish Office in Queen Street, and has been forwarded to Dublin, where it will no doubt be dealt with without unnecessary delay.

MR. COX: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to his statement that the Government would allow facilities to both the parties before the Special Commission, whether it is true that the police at Quin and Clooney, county Clare, tore down placards announcing a public collection in aid of the fund for the defence of the Irish Members before the Commission; and, if so, by what authority?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Constabulary authorities report that it appears that four copies of the placard in question were taken down. The collection was announced as being made under the auspices of a suppressed branch of the League.

MR. COX: May I ask whether the placards had not been issued by the central branch in Dublin, which is not suppressed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot answer that question, but the placard was torn down as being an attempt to revive the League in that district.

MR. SEXTON: Is this attempt to prevent the defendants from raising funds for their defence to be taken as an instance of equal facilities to both parties.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No attempt has been made, or can, or will be made to prevent the raising of such funds.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the written applications of the solicitors of the prisoner Tracy for leave to visit him in Belfast Gaol?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Prison Board inform me that it would be inexpedient to establish a precedent of the kind suggested in the question. They add that the grounds on which the solicitors made their request to see the prisoner were chiefly owing to alleged injustice of sentence. This is a matter upon which every prisoner has a right to memorialize the Lord Lieutenant at any time, and this course was pointed out to the solicitors as the proper one. The Board saw no reason to relax their rules in this case, as they had strong reason for believing that the alleged purpose of the interview was not *bonâ fide*.

MR. SEXTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman not consider it would be advisable for every prisoner wishing to memorialize the Lord Lieutenant to have the assistance of a solicitor?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR did not reply.

THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether it is a fact that under the Regulations of the Royal Military Academy and Royal Military College the contribution payable for a cadet whose father is serving in the Army or Navy varies from £80 for the son of a General or Admiral to £40 for the son of a junior commissioned officer, but that a warrant officer whose son gains admission into Woolwich or Sandhurst is required to pay £150 a year, the sum required for the son of a private gentleman; and, if this be true, whether he will reconsider the decision which thus excludes non-commissioned officers from the privileges allowed to commissioned members of both Services, of paying proportionately graduated contributions for their sons who may be cadets?

MR. BRODRICK: Provision has not been made in the Regulations for the admission of the sons of warrant and non-commissioned officers to the Royal Military Academy or Royal Military College at a reduced rate, because it has been considered that the great expense of the preliminary education would deter such candidates from presenting themselves. Should, however, such a case occur in practice, my right hon. Friend would be quite ready to consider the advisability of amending the warrant.

DOVER CONVICT PRISON.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary

of State for the Home Department what has been the cost of the Convict Prison at Dover; how many prisoners are at present confined in that prison; and on what public works are convicts sentenced to penal servitude now employed?

MR. STUART WORTLEY: The expenditure on the prison up to date, including about £13,000 for the purchase of the land, has been £61,807, 15s. 4d.; 102 prisoners are at present confined there. At Chatham, Portland, and Portsmouth convicts are now being employed on various works for the War Office and Admiralty Departments, such as quarrying stone, defences, field-works, harbour extension works, dock-yard buildings, and torpedo buildings. At Portsmouth the Victoria Barracks are being built by convict labour.

EDUCATION IN THE BLACK COUNTRY.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been called to a statement in the *Star* newspaper, that Miss Caroline Cox, a nailmaker of Halesowen, now 15 years of age, is unable to say her alphabet; that she left school at 12 without passing any examination; and, that she is still without the opportunity of acquiring the most rudimentary education; whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into this statement; and whether there is an ample provision of night schools in the Dudley district?

*SIR W. HART DYKE: I know nothing of the case to which the hon. Member refers. If he can procure some more definite information as to the residence and antecedents of this young lady, I will endeavour to obtain some information from the local authorities. Meanwhile I find the place mentioned in the question is not in the Dudley district.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the village of Halesowen, where this young lady came from, is only a mile and a half outside the Dudley district?

MR. BROOKE ROBINSON (Dudley): As I know something of Dudley, I am able to say that Halesowen is in no way under the control of the local authorities of Dudley.

IRISH TITHE RENT-CHARGE.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it is the fact that landed proprietors in Ireland, whose incomes have been largely reduced, in numerous cases by one-half, by the Land Commission, are still required to pay the full tithe rent-charge fixed on their unreduced rentals; and, if so, whether the Government intend taking measures to regulate this charge to the reduced rentals?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): It is a fact that landed proprietors in Ireland are still required to pay the full tithe rent-charge on their estates. The Government cannot admit that tithe rent charge, which is a first charge on the land having priority over all others, should be regulated in proportion to rent. The question of charges on Irish land generally is one of much delicacy and complexity, but it is one on which I could express no opinion until I felt sure that such opinion could be followed by legislation.

EVICTION OF CARETAKERS.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, on the estate of Mr. George Moore, of Ballintubber, County Mayo, four caretakers were, on the 8th inst., illegally evicted by the Sheriff on a chairman's decree, without summons or warrant from a magistrate; and, three of the parties having retaken possession, will the police be restrained from interfering in the matter, leaving the landlord to his legal remedy?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that three, not four, caretakers were evicted on the property referred to. I understand that the evictions were fully carried out in accordance with the law. The persons have gone back into possession, and the agent proposes taking his legal remedy forthwith.

CLASSIFICATION OF IRISH PRISONERS.

MR. WILLIAM CORBET (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether

it is true that prisoners in Ireland are "classed" for exercise, and that first offenders are not required to exercise with those who have been convicted more than once; and whether this rule is put in force in regard to prisoners under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The General Prisons Board report that the instructions to Governors of Irish Prisons are as stated in the question, and, unless on medical grounds, no exception is recognized in regard to convicted criminal prisoners.

GRANTS IN AID TO PROVINCIAL COLLEGES.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is now prepared to state the names of the gentlemen who are to serve on the Committee to consider the distribution of the grants in aid to provincial Colleges; and if he can state the aggregate amount of the proposed grants?

*MR. GOSCHEN: The Committee will consist of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London, the hon. Member for South Manchester, the hon. Member for the Prestwich Division of Lancashire, Dr. Percival, head master of Rugby, and the Rev. G. F. Browne (hon. Fellow of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge). The Vote, which will appear in the Estimates of this year, for "University Colleges in Great Britain," amounts to £15,000.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green S.W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, whether the Board will postpone the consideration of any further grants of pensions to officers of the Board, and leave the question to be decided by the London County Council?

Mr. TATTON EGERTON was not present, and

MR. PICKERSGILL said: As the representative of the Metropolitan Board is not here, may I ask the President of the Local Government Board whether Her Majesty's Government will not attempt, by means of legislation, to prevent this Board in its last hours of existence granting exorbitant pensions to a number of its officers?

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Member can scarcely be serious in inviting the Government to attempt to legislate in regard to matters which must occur, if at all, between now and the 31st of the month.

THE CONVEYANCE OF THE AUSTRALIAN MAILS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General what is the cause of the delay in submitting to the House the contract for the conveyance of the Australian mails; and, at what date were the terms of the contract arranged?

*MR. RAIKES: The terms of the Australian Mail Contracts were arranged in 1887. The Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia have formally confirmed them, but a question is still pending respecting the time tables framed under these Contracts, and I have found it necessary to take the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown before I can submit the contracts for the approval of the House.

LAKE NYASSA.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true that a Portuguese Military Expedition under Lieutenant Cardoso has reached Lake Nyassa, and has occupied the territory near Maponda, on the borders of that lake; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will inform the Portuguese Government that they refuse to recognize any assertion of territorial sovereignty by Portugal in the Nyassa region, and demand the withdrawal of the expedition?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): We have received no fresh information regarding the expedition since, in the debate on the Address, I stated the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject. We have no positive information that it has reached Lake Nyassa, but there is little doubt that it has. Her Majesty's Government are watching with

some anxiety the progress of an armed expedition into the neighbourhood of British settlements, and they have warned the Portuguese Government of the existence of British interests on the lake which they cannot suffer to be disturbed or imperilled, but the object of the expedition has been stated by the Portuguese Government to be peaceful, and as it has not as yet touched any territory under British sovereignty or protectorate we have no right to demand its withdrawal.

RICHMOND BARRACKS.

CAPTAIN SELWYN (Cambridge, Wisbeach): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is a fact, as stated in Dr. Barr's letter to the *Times* of 9th March, that

> "There was a great deal of sickness in the Richmond Prison. The General Prisons Board of Ireland, to whom the health of the prisoners is a matter of the deepest concern, have recently closed this prison;"

and whether a detachment of the Queen's Regiment, now quartered in the Royal Barracks, Dublin, is being moved this week into the same unhealthy building?

*MR. BRODRICK: I cannot answer for the sanitary condition of the Richmond Prison while under the Prisons Board; but since it has been occupied by troops the military authorities in Ireland report that they have been very healthy. The detachment now in Wellington Barracks (the building referred to) is to be moved to-day to Linen Hall Barracks to make room for a detachment of the West Surrey Regiment from the Royal Barracks, who had to be moved while certain demolitions are taking place there, which are regarded as of essential importance to the general sanitary condition of the Royal Barracks.

MR. SWIFT MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Was any alteration made in the sanitary condition of Richmond Barracks at the time of its conversion from a prison into barracks?

*MR. BRODRICK: No structural alterations have been made, but some are in contemplation.

MR. MAC NEILL: In fact, troops are to be sent to a place which was discontinued as a prison because of the bad drainage?

ARABI PASHA.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true that Arabi Pasha, who is detained at Colombo, has complained that the climate there is injuring his health; and, whether the Government will consider the advisability of removing Arabi to a more suitable country, or of letting him go home to Egypt?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: We have not received any complaint from Arabi Pasha that the climate is injuring his health. Her Majesty's Government cannot undertake to press the Government of Egypt to allow him to return there, as they believe that his presence in Egypt would be inconsistent with the public interests.

MR. W. REDMOND: Might I ask whether the Government intended that this unfortunate gentleman should be in exile for the whole of his life?

*SIR J. FERGUSSON: I am not in a position to give an answer to that question.

MR. W. REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether there is not a feeling widely prevalent in Egypt that it would tend greatly to the restoration of good order and good government in that country if Arabi were allowed to return?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE FRENCH PROTESTANT CHURCH.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney General what steps have been taken pending the approval of a new scheme by the Court of Chancery to ensure the safe custody of the library of the French Protestant Church, and whether it has been removed to Guildhall; and whether, in view of the death of the Pasteur Daugars, and the doubts which have arisen as to the legal constitution of the present Consistorie, any steps will be taken to prevent the election of another pasteur until the legal powers of the Consistorie have been ascertained?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. E. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): Pending the approval of a new scheme by the Chancery Division, the books referred to by the hon. Member have been kept in

the same room in the neighbourhood of Tottenham Court Road, near the place in which the services are temporarily conducted, and they are, I believe, in safe custody. Careful inquiries are from time to time made. Under my direction an application was made some months ago to the Chancery Division to determine whether a legal consistory now exists. That case already stands for argument. In consequence of the death of M. Daugars I have directed an application to be made to expedite the hearing of the case. The acting consistory have only appointed a pastor temporarily. From communications received I believe that they will not proceed to fill the office permanently until the question has been determined whether they are a legally constituted consistory or not.

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Returns relating to Joint Stock Companies, for which an Address was agreed to on 18th June 1888, and which were promised by him on the 11th December, will be laid upon the Table of the House?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I regret that delay has taken place in the issue of these Returns, but I am assured that they will be circulated on Wednesday next.

THE AUSTRALIAN SQUADRON.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is true that the Colony of Queensland has refused to contribute its share towards the cost of building the cruisers for the Australian Squadron; whether this refusal of one of the Australian Colonies to be a party to the agreement relieves the other Colonies from their obligations; whether these other Colonies have agreed to contribute in spite of the refusal of Queensland; and whether the share of the contribution of Queensland will fall upon the Imperial Government?

BARON H. DE WORMS: The Colony of Queensland has not yet passed the necessary Act for securing its contribution towards the cost of the building of the cruisers for the Australian Squadron, but it is confidently anticipated that before the first payment becomes due she will have joined the other Colonies. As to the second and third paragraphs of the right hon. Gentleman's Question, all the Colonies with the exception of Queensland have already bound themselves to carry out the agreement by passing the necessary Acts, and I may add that the greater number of them have specially urged Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the construction of the ships, notwithstanding the fact that Queensland has not yet signified her adherence. As regards the last paragraph of the question, as already stated, it is not anticipated that this question will arise. It would, therefore, be premature to express any opinion on the subject at present.

IRELAND—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE CRIMINAL LAW PROCEDURE ACT—TREATMENT OF MR. O'BRIEN.

MR. CRAIG (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the prison treatment of persons committed under "The Criminal Law Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887"?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: No, Sir. The Government, while seeing no grounds for any investigation of the kind, would have no objection to it so far as they are personally concerned; but they do not think a Committee of the House of Commons consisting of political partizans would be a satisfactory tribunal for determining a question with regard to which there has been and is much envenomed controversy.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has any objection to allowing us any means of finally determining questions as to matters of fact with regard to the prison treatment of Mr. W. O'Brien, as the Chief Secretary for Ireland has questioned the accuracy of the statements which I made in the House yesterday, and the accuracy of which I am prepared to prove?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like to know what the investigation suggested by the hon. Member is to be. I think there would be a great advantage

in having an investigation into many things in Ireland. For example, I should like to have an investigation in regard to the intimidation exercised on Irish prison officials. I should like to know what sort of inquiry the hon. Gentleman desires.

MR. SEXTON: As the right hon. Gentleman has questioned my veracity, and as I am prepared to maintain it, I will accept either a Committee of the House or a public inquiry on oath.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I never questioned the veracity of the hon. Gentleman; but I did question the prudence of the hon. Gentleman in relying upon the statement in the *Freeman's Journal.*

MR. SEXTON: The question has not been answered. I said that I would accept a Committee of the House or any public inquiry on oath. Which of them will the right hon. Gentleman give?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Leader of the House has said that he does not think a Committee of the House is a proper tribunal, and I agree with him in that respect; and the constitution of any other tribunal is not an easy matter.

SIR W. HARCOURT (Derby): I must put a question to the First Lord of the Treasury, who has said that a Committee of the House is not an expedient tribunal. I understand that there is an issue of fact on a very important matter between the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the hon. Member. The hon. Member has made a statement, and the only answer which the right hon. Gentleman makes is that he has taken it from the *Freeman's Journal*, which happens to be the authority on which the right hon. Gentleman himself drew up a memorandum. What I wish to ask is whether a Minister of the Crown is entitled to say——[*Cries of* "Order!"] I am entirely in order. I would ask whether a Minister of the Crown is entitled to give that sort of denial which the right hon. Gentleman has given? [*Cries of* "Order."] Perhaps the noble Lord (Viscount Cranborne) will allow the Speaker to call me to order, and not do it himself. I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will give any method whatever of ascertaining whether the point-blank denials of the Chief Secretary for Ireland are or are not well founded?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman must be aware that it has been the unhappy lot, not only of myself but of most of my predecessors, often to make statements in this House at variance with those made by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. I think he will admit that if every time such a collision of opinion occured a public inquiry had been granted, the kingdom would not have sufficed to supply the tribunals. I should like to know what tribunal the hon. Gentleman would suggest before I give any answer.

MR. SEXTON: I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker. The contention is not one as to matters of opinion, but as to matters of fact determinable by evidence. And the right hon. Gentleman having stated yesterday that the declaration I made to the House is untrue, I, being prepared to prove it, ask you, Sir, whether I am not entitled to claim from him some means of proving the statement I made?

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not a question of order upon which I can be called in. The matter at issue must be decided as the House thinks proper.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): Perhaps I may be allowed to say a word or two on the subject.

*Mr. SPEAKER: There is no Question before the House; but if the hon. Member desires to make a personal statement on the point that he informed me yesterday he wished to make he may do so by the indulgence of the House.

MR. CONDON: That was just what I am asking. I desire the indulgence of the House to make a personal explanation. The Chief Secretary, referring to Mr. Sexton's version of the O'Brien incident yesterday, said, "As he had repeated that calumny, he (Mr. Balfour) took this opportunity of again giving the most emphatic contradiction to every syllable of it." Now, Sir, it is a matter of public notoriety that I, in my capacity of Mayor of Clonmel, have sent reports similar to that which appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* to hundreds of persons in this country and in Ireland, in reply to inquiries as to Mr. O'Brien's condition and his treatment in Clonmel Gaol. I may also inform the Chief Secretary and

the House that it was I who furnished the report to the representative of the *Freeman's Journal* at Clonmel as to the treatment received by Mr. O'Brien in that prison, and that that report was taken down by myself in writing from Mr. O'Brien, in the presence of Mr. Alderman Hackett, a visiting justice, appointed by the Grand Jury to look after prisoners in Clonmel Gaol, and also in the presence of the chief warder Gough. If the right hon. Gentleman grants the inquiry now asked for, and which I asked for over a month ago in replying to the letter addressed by the Chief Secretary to "My dear Mr. Armytage," and to which the right hon. Gentleman did not deign or dare to reply, I am prepared to prove every syllable that appeared in the report in the *Freeman's Journal*. I would then show to the country whether the Chief Secretary was more accurate in his denial yesterday than he was in his statement to the Dublin banqueters, when he said that Mr. O'Brien not only threw all obstacles in the way of allowing himself to be medically examined, but absolutely refused to allow himself to be examined.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It appears to me that the personal explanation of the hon. Gentleman is of a somewhat aggressive and argumentative character. I can only repeat to the House what I said before—namely, that, as far as I am concerned, I see a great advantage in having an adequate and independent inquiry which should not merely embrace the particular allegations over which this conversation has spread, but which should also investigate the whole question of the extent and method in which intimidation has been practised upon prison officials in Ireland. There is, however, a great difficulty in constituting a tribunal of such a kind as would meet with confidence on all sides. I have myself given great attention to the subject, and I have always given up the attempt in despair. But if hon. Members opposite make a suggestion that will command the favour of the House, no difficulty will be placed in the way.

MR. BIGGAR: Perhaps I may ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will propose a Bill for the appointment of a Commission of Judges?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Sir, as a direct issue of fact has been raised between the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the hon. Gentleman the Lord Mayor of Dublin upon a matter of great consequence concerning the treatment of an hon. Member of this House now in prison, and as a mode of inquiry by a Committee of this House has been proposed by the Lord Mayor of Dublin and has been declined by Her Majesty's Government, not on the ground that the inquiry is an improper thing, but on the ground that in their opinion that is not a fit organ for the inquiry, I will ask Her Majesty's Government whether, having declined to accept the mode suggested, they are prepared to propose any other mode of inquiry.

H.M.S. "*SULTAN*."

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty for the latest news with regard to H.M.S *Sultan*?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I received a telegram last night from the Commander-in-Chief as follows:—

"Work on *Sultan* has been delayed by breaking down of pumps and heavy swell. Hope, however, to make an attempt to float ship to-morrow morning."

This morning I received a further telegram—

"Heavy north-east gale. High sea forced *Sultan* off the rock. Sank 11.45. Upper works visible above water. No loss of life. Ships returning into harbour."

I have directed the Commander-in-Chief to ascertain the extent and position of the damage, and then, if practicable, we hope to raise her.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway): Is the *Sultan* the ship in connection with which a Supplementary Estimate of £45,000 was issued this morning?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

MR. H. L. W. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I wish to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Metropolitan Board of Works will to-morrow open tenders for several hundred thousand pounds for the Blackwall Tunnel scheme, and whether the Local Government Board can do anything to postpone that step until the County

Council are able to consider whether that great expenditure is necessary or desirable?

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Member for Dundee informed me last night that the Metropolitan Board of Works proposed to take this step, which was the first information I had on this subject. The Local Government Board have no authority or power to interfere if the Metropolitan Board of Works should act in the way suggested by the hon. Member; but I cannot help saying that in my opinion, if the Metropolitan Board of Works do proceed to enter on contracts of the nature mentioned by the hon. Gentleman, they would be taking a course which is much to be regretted.

MR. LAWSON: If the Metropolitan Board of Works conclude the contract in question, will the right hon. Gentleman introduce legislation rendering it null and void?

*MR. RITCHIE: I cannot undertake to introduce retrospective legislation of the character suggested, inasmuch as the Board of Works would only have been acting in the exercise of their statutory powers. I propose to take a course which I am not usually anxious to do in cases where the Local Government Board have no power of interference. I propose to address a communication to the Metropolitan Board of Works suggesting that they had better defer the action proposed to be taken until the County Council have had time to consider the matter.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): With reference to the announcement just made by the right hon. Gentleman, I beg to ask whether, in his proposed communication to the Metropolitan Board of Works, he will also refer to the question of pensions?

*MR. RITCHIE: I think, in the interests of the larger question of the proposed contract, it would be advisable to confine the communication of the Local Government Board to that subject, and not to enter upon the subject of pensions.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty with reference to the business of this evening, whether he proposes to take that part of the Estimates which has reference to shipbuilding; and whether he will take Votes as to which we have been promised but have not yet received details?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I am much obliged to my right hon. Friend for putting the question. It is not our fault that the details have not been issued for they have been a long time in the hands of the printers. It would I think be convenient to confine the discussion to-night on the Votes which have no connection with shipbuilding or dockyard administration.

MR. H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether there is any legal necessity that the Vote on Account of the Civil Service should be included in the Money Bill which must be passed before March 31?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman's experience at the Treasury has no doubt informed him that it is necessary in order to comply with the law that the Supplementary Estimates and the Vote for the pay of the Army and Navy should be included in a Money Bill, which must receive the Royal Assent in sufficient time to allow of issues to be made from the Exchequer before the end of the current financial year; but his question suggests that the same absolute legal necessity does not extend to the Vote on Account for Civil Services, and that issues may be made from the Exchequer for those services before they are authorized by statute. There is precedent for not including in the March Money Bill, Ways and Means voted in respect of Civil Votes on Account. I am doubtful as to the strict legality of that course; but if it be not unlawful it is certainly not in accordance with the financial regularity which it is the duty of the Government to observe, if it is at all possible to do so.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): The right hon. Gentleman stated yesterday that the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates are not to be gone into to-night. I see they had been put down on the Paper. Does the right hon. Gentleman intend to adhere to the arrangement?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think I said last night that I did not propose to take Civil Service Supplementary Estimates after 12 o'clock to-night. The last day

on which they can be taken, unless the time of private Members is encroached upon, is Monday next. I believe it is the desire of right hon. Gentlemen opposite that the debate on the Vote on Account should be taken on Monday. Under these circumstances I hope the Supplementary Estimates will be agreed to to-night, in order that it will not be necessary for us to make any proposal to the House for further facilities.

DR. CAMERON: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not most distinctly say yesterday he would not take them, and is it fair, now that hon. Members have made their arrangements accordingly, that we should have sprung upon us a very important debate?

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Would not the best way out of the difficulty be to withdraw the remainder of the Vote to Sheriff Ivory?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: It is not in our power to do that. The Supplementary Estimate is asked for expenses incurred, and we must take the judgment of the House on it. I have endeavoured to be frank with the hon. Gentleman. I have explained the circumstances in which we are placed, and if the hon. Gentleman is of opinion that, instead of meeting for an hour or half an hour after 12 o'clock, it is better that the time of private Members should be taken, that course can be taken. But then the responsibility will rest with him.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask whether, supposing an hon. Member moved to report Progress after 12 o'clock, if the Naval Estimates had been taken before 12, the right hon. Gentleman will assent to the Motion.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am compelled to take this course by the exigencies of the public service. It has been considered better that the House should sit for half-an-hour after 12 than encroach upon the time of private Members.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If any hon. Member moves to report Progress after 12 o'clock in the event of the Navy Estimates having been taken, will the right hon. Gentleman assent to the Motion?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I think it would be undesirable, if the majority desire to go on with public business, that Progress should be reported at the instance of some three orfour Members.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Then I will only ask what becomes of the pledge that was given by the right hon. Gentleman yesterday?

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am adhering to that pledge.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

William George Spencer Scott Compton (commonly called Earl Compton), for the Southern Part of the West Riding of the County of York (Barnsley Division).

MOTION.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Motion made, and Question put,

"That the Proceedings of the Committee of Supply, if the Committee be sitting at 12 o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order 'Sittings of the House.'"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

The House divided: — Ayes 215; Noes 143.—(Division List, No. 18.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—REPORT.

The Report of Committee of Supply was brought up and agreed to.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

GUNS AND ORDNANCE STORES FOR THE NAVAL SERVICE.

*MR. DUFF (Banffshire): At the present moment the attention of the country is more directed to the new Naval Defence programme than it is to the details of administration. As that programme will be fully discussed on future occasions I shall not refer to it, except incidentally so far as it affects the Motion I have to submit to the House. But, Sir, the question involved in the subject I desire to bring forward is one of such vital importance, that I make no apology for raising it, and I am glad of an opportunity of doing so when naval affairs are receiving a more than usual amount of public attention. Sir, everyone at all conversant with naval affairs has

known for several years that the delay in procuring guns and Naval Ordnance Stores has been the weakest part of our administrative system. Were it necessary, I could give the Committee endless statistics to prove that vessels, otherwise complete, have been kept waiting for their guns, but after the admission of the First Lord, on Thursday, "that ships have been kept waiting for months, and in some cases for years, for their guns," I will not inflict figures on the Committee in support of what I regard as the complete collapse of our present system. In reference to the delay attending the delivery of guns, the First Lord told us that there had been a block in the road, and that he and the Secretary for War had determined to widen the road. What we want, in my opinion, is not to widen the old road, but to make an entirely new one. Sir, dealing with the Motion I am submitting to the House, I desire to remind hon. Members what our present system is. The money for Naval Ordnance, since last year, has been taken in Naval Votes. But the contract for guns, and most Naval Ordnance Stores, continue to be made by the War Office. This creates a dual control, and a divided responsibility, fatal to efficiency, and most detrimental, in my opinion, to the public interest. If I am asked how this is to be remedied, I reply at once by saying the Admiralty ought to adopt the conclusions arrived at by the Conference between the Admiralty and the War Office, held in June, 1886, whereby the Admiralty undertook to take the entire responsibility of providing themselves with guns and Ordnance stores. Although they were only a short time in office, Lord Ripon's Board of Admiralty, with the full concurrence of the Director of Naval Ordnance, came to the conclusion that that was the only way out of our present difficulty. And although the change was not effected when the late Board went out of office, yet the principle, as I will presently show, had been adopted, and the change was in a fair way of being accomplished. But the present Board would not undertake the responsibility, at the same time they fully admit the weakness of the existing system. Here is what the First Lord said in introducing the Estimates last year—

"Our difficulty, and I will be quite frank with the House, is not one of want of funds, or of want of shipbuilding power, it is one of gun-producing power."

That we all know, but what I complain of is that the noble Lord's energy is not equal to his frankness. He takes no effective steps to improve our gun-producing power. Then, on the same occasion, the Secretary to the Admiralty, in reply to some remarks of mine, said—

"The hon. Gentleman suggests that we should take more money for guns and less for ships. They (the Admiralty) had taken as much money for guns as the manufactories could turn out, and in proof of that the War Office would have to return to the Treasury a very large amount of money which they had taken for naval armaments this year, and which they had been unable to spend. It would, therefore, be idle for the Admiralty to take an excessive amount, knowing the difficulty there would be in expending the money asked for last year."

So here we have the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Secretary to the Admiralty, coming down to the House, and telling us, while they are scandalously short of guns, and at a time when they have never turned out more than 15 guns above 9 inches in diameter in any one year, that although they have plenty of money, yet they do not know how to increase our gun-producing power. Sir, I must say, to me this is a pitiable, I might say a humiliating, admission. Here are we, the greatest mechanical and manufacturing country in the world, turning out guns for half the Foreign Navies in the world, yet when we want guns for our own Navy, the authorities of the Admiralty quietly fold their arms, and say, "Though we have plenty of money, yet we can't get the guns." This is what the administrative capacity of the First Lord and the commercial genius of the Secretary of the Admiralty have brought us to! Sir, there used to be a saying in my day in the Navy that there was no such word as "can't" on board a man-of-war. I fear the determination to overcome difficulties which that saying implies, though still retained in the Navy, is not to be found controlling the policy of the present Board of Admiralty. Now, Sir, the difficulties the Admiralty have to overcome are not, in my opinion, insurmountable—they involve some responsibility and require some administrative capacity, such as we have a right to

expect in a First Lord of the Admiralty. All you have to do is to go into the market for your guns, make your own contract for them, just as you do for your ships and your engines. I do not suggest this on my own responsibility; it was the system which, as I have said, the late Board had agreed to adopt in accordance with the recommendation of the Conference to which I have referred, confirmed in its main principles by an Interdepartmental Committee on which the War Office, Admiralty, and Treasury were represented. The whole departmental correspondence which led to the Naval Ordnance Vote being taken in the Navy Estimates is contained in the Appendix to the 5th Report of the Army Estimates Committee of 1887. It is full of valuable information on this subject; and I do not think any work which the Committee so ably presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Paddington has done will be more useful in exposing, as this correspondence does, the hopeless confusion which prevails under the existing dual system. Whoever peruses these Papers impartially will understand the cause of the delay in the delivery of our guns and the disaster the present system would inevitably bring about in time of war. I must also say that, in my opinion, the War Office comes very well out of the existing muddle, as the Papers show that the entire responsibility for not adopting the Committee recommendation is due to the timidity of the present Board of Admiralty. The reasons for adopting the Resolution I am submitting to the House are so amply sustained in the Papers I have alluded to that I must briefly refer to them, and will, in doing so, give a short statement of what occurred. In December, 1884, the Director of Artillery, General Alderson, revives an old discussion as to the desirability of the Admiralty taking the responsibility of providing their own guns and warlike stores. He says—

"The great changes which have taken place since 1868, amounting to almost a revolution in our armaments, have tended to accentuate the importance of making the Admiralty entirely responsible (as indeed they are at this moment partially so) for the provision of all warlike material required for the Navy. . . It is high time that the system detrimental to both Services should be brought to an end, especially now the completion of naval armaments is becoming more and more urgent. The responsibility heretofore has been dangerously divided, and I can only repeat that such a division of responsibility is certain to lead to great inconvenience in any case, and to absolute disaster in case of war."

General Alderson explains further on—

"That if the Admiralty take their own money they will of course make their own contracts."

After this date there is a long correspondence between Admiralty and War Office, and partly on account of changes of Government the contemplated alteration in the system is delayed. In the spring of 1886 the *Collingwood's* guns burst, and that led to the revival of the subject. The matter was fully discussed at Lord Ripon's Board of Admiralty, of which I was then a member; a decision was arrived at that a radical change was required in the then existing system. This led to a conference between the Admiralty and War Office which recommended the change, only effected last year, of the transfer of the Naval Ordnance Vote from Army to Navy Estimates They further said they approved the views of General Alderson, I which have just quoted, that the Admiralty should make their own contracts. These views were approved by Lord Ripon and his colleagues. I should, perhaps, mention that my right hon. Friend, Mr. Hibbert, presided at the Conference—he is a gentleman well known in the House, and his approval of the scheme will I am sure be accepted by many hon. Members as an assurance that it was financially and administratively sound. Admiral Hopkins, then Director of Naval Ordnance, was prepared to take the responsibility of ordering guns directly from the trade. No doubt in sanctioning this change the Board did undertake a serious responsibility. But what was felt by Lord Ripon and his colleagues, was that there would be a still greater responsibility in continuing a system which had so conspicuously failed. The Conference I have referred to was followed by an Interdepartmental Committee, in which the Treasury was represented. They confirm the views adopted at the Conference. I will read the paragraph in their Report which to the Resolution refers—

"In regard to the provision of future supplies, it is agreed that the Admiralty shall annually furnish to the War Office notice of their probable requirements for warlike stores of all kinds, in time for the preparation of the Esti-

mates, in order that the War Office may state the extent to which the requirements of the Navy can be met from the Government establishments at the date to be settled between the two departments for delivery; but it will be understood that the private trade may be resorted to by the Admiralty, not merely for articles which the War Office cannot supply within the required time, but on due notice to the office, for any articles which may be obtained by the requisite dates more cheaply from the private trade."

So far as heavy guns are concerned the present Admiralty have paid no attention to that recommendation. In the correspondence every possible objection is raised by the Admiralty to carrying out the Committee's recommendation. It is quite clear to me that the present Board never realized the intention of their predecessors. What the late Board contemplated was this. They would go to the War Office in the first instance and say, we want so many guns by the end of the next two years, say 100 guns, how many can you let us have? Woolwich might reply. "We can let you have 20." These would be ordered by the Admiralty direct from Woolwich; but regarding the other 80 guns, the Admiralty would go into the market for them. Take in tenders for so many, not only from Armstrong and Whitworth, but from any firm in the Kingdom that was willing to compete and could satisfy the Director of Naval Ordnance that they were prepared to fulfil the conditions of the contract. If it was found by experience that guns could be obtained cheaper and quicker from private firms than from Woolwich, then the latter, so far as naval ordnance is concerned, would be gradually dropped. I ventured to say something to this effect last year; the idea was received with ridicule on the bench opposite. I was told that if I understood the subject I would know that no private firm would go to the expense of laying down plant unless they received a continuous order. But what has happened since then? You have employed Messrs. Vickers, of Sheffield. Are you satisfied that there are no other firms that would undertake orders on the same conditions as Messrs. Vickers? I believe, from reliable information that has reached me, that there are many firms in the country that are equally capable and willing to undertake Government work. In my opinion, the country ought to have the full benefit of competition in the open market. Instead of that, your policy seems to be to create and perpetuate a monopoly. By going to the market, you keep a check on Woolwich and other Government establishments, just as by building ships by contract you keep a check on your Dockyards. But there is a far more important advantage than this. You develop the resources of the country, and you have an enormous and powerful reserve to fall back on in case of an emergency. In the correspondence between the Departments, the War Office are constantly urging the Admiralty to adopt the recommendations of the Committee; but the only letter which seems to have produced any effect is that of the 13th June, 1887, when the War Office remind the Admiralty that the Government have given pledges in Parliament that the existing system will be changed. This appeal to the Admiralty is of course irresistible, and consequently a change to a certain extent is made. The money required for naval ordnance is taken in the Naval Estimates in 1888, but the system of divided responsibility and dual control remains exactly where it was. The Admiralty will not make their own contracts. They decline to adopt the recommendations of the Committee which I have quoted to the House. In case anything goes wrong, they prefer to shelter themselves behind the War Office to taking the responsibility which really belongs to them. I alluded just now to the pledge given in Parliament, as the lever by which the Admiralty had to a certain extent been moved. It is contained in a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, when he was War Minister in September, 1886. It must be remembered that he speaks with the authority of an ex-First Lord of the Admiralty. He says—

"I agree with all that has been said about making the Navy alone responsible for its own munition of war. I have urged that in and out of office for a very long time. For the future the responsibility will rest with the Navy for the supply of all materials of every kind which is required for its own branch of the service. They may go to Woolwich for such guns as Woolwich may supply, or to Whitworth Co., they will have a perfectly free hand."

From this statement I at once came to the conclusion that the Admiralty were

going to adopt the policy which Lord Ripon's Board had sanctioned, but which they did not remain long enough in office to carry out. I got up at once, and expressed my satisfaction that there was to be a continuity of policy in this important branch of naval administration. But the hope I entertained was soon doomed to disappointment, as the present Board, as soon as they got comfortably settled in office, continued the old custom of ordering their guns through the War Office, the results we know having proved the complete failure of the present system. Now I have quoted military authorities I am advocating, let me refer to a naval authority. Admiral Hopkins, the present Controller of the Navy, was examined before Sir James Stephen's Commission. He had been three years Director of Naval Ordnance. He is asked by the Chairman of the Commission—

"(2) Do you think it would be a better plan to have the supply of the two services separately provided for?—I think it is the only plan; I think in the event of war the amount of work that the Commissary General at Woolwich would have to do would be excessive."

Then the Chairman says—

"He has in fact to do duties of a very different kind: he may be called upon at one and the same moment to send all sorts of stores to an army in the field, and also to a naval squadron in the Pacific Ocean?

Quite so.

"They require very different things?—Yes, I may say that it is all in process of alteration. I was a Member of that Committee at the War Office lately which put before the Treasury very strongly that really the only way to insure what may be considered a respectable system is for the Naval Authorities to take money in Naval Votes, and provide their own naval material, and then it would be in their own hands."

My noble Friend opposite the Member for Marylebone has expressed himself in favour of that system. Admiral Sir J. Commerell, a very distinguished and experienced officer, lately a Member of this House, expressed himself very decidedly from the Benches opposite in favour of what he termed "Home Rule" at the Admiralty; and he gave an instance of the absurdity of the present system, by telling us of a vessel which had been sent to the West Indies, while her Ordnance stores were all despatched to the Mediteranean. Now, Sir, in this matter the Admiralty have taken up an isolated position. They are opposed to naval opinions; they are opposed to the recommendation of the Inter departmental Committee; they are opposed to the War Office as represented by the Director of Artillery; and they are opposed to the views expressed by the First Lord of the Treasury in the House. In some of their letters the Admiralty have put forward an alternative policy, and suggested the revival of the old Ordnance Department, common to both services. But this system has already been tried and failed. There was constant friction between the Admiralty and the Ordnance Department. The naval men and the Secretary of the Admiralty of the day, Sir John Barrow, were all opposed to it, as the Papers I have referred to will show. Now, I may be asked why I bring forward this Motion. My reply is, because I regard the failure of the Government to supply us with guns as one of the grossest administrative blunders of modern times, and because I entertain a sincere conviction that, if the policy I am advocating had been adopted in 1886, we should not be in the weak position we are in to-day. I may be told that this is a mere speculative opinion; but in support of that opinion I am able to appeal to the experience of a neighbouring country. Before the Franco-German War, France had a system analogous to ours. It completely broke down. They have now a system which works admirably. The naval authorities and the military are thoroughly independent. They each apply directly to the market for tenders when material is wanted, get supplied either with guns, or with the blocks of steel or finished material, as they think best. The Navy have an establishment at Rueil, the Army at Bourges, where material is taken and guns are finished. The Marine Department have Artillery officers attached, for testing the guns and material; but these officers are directly under the Marine Department. As open competition prevails, there is no limit to the number of firms that compete. I can give the names of the five principal ones—Le Creuzot, St. Chamond, Chatillon, Fives Lille, Forges et Chantiers

de la Mediterranée. These are in addition to the two Government establishments. Contrast this with the three sources of supply we have hitherto relied on—viz., Woolwich, Whitworth, and Armstrong, and bear in mind that the two private firms make largely for foreign countries, and it is not surprising that France has less difficulty in getting guns than we experience. The encouragement given to the trade, as opposed to our system of practically subsidizing two firms, has largely developed the steel trade in France. The American Commission, sent to Europe by U.S. Foundry Board to report on the different systems, speak with unqualified approval of the French system. They remind us that France has been forced into the system of relying mainly on private firms, by the complete collapse of the Government establishments during the Franco-German War. The First Lord of the Admiralty is never tired of telling us how infinitely superior we are to France regarding the rapidity with which we can build our ships. He made an eloquent speech on the subject at Glasgow; when I read it I could not help thinking that our boasted superiority was entirely neutralized by our inability to supply the ships with guns. I believe in this respect France is three or four years ahead of us. Now, let me turn to the "statement" of the First Lord. It is almost superfluous to say that when I come to the Ordnance Department, I find he has to tell us that there has been a very great delay in the delivery of guns; of course, this statement, as usual, is accompanied by a hope—no; it was a hope last season—but that perennial spring is nearly dried up at the Admiralty; it is a "belief" that guns will be delivered more punctually in the future. We are then told that much of this delay is due to faulty liners. This may be the case to a certain extent, but when we have guns delayed for two years, as in the case of the *Collingwoods*, and the gun only takes one year to make, it is absurd to attribute the delay to the "liner." Now, let me ask the House to consider for a moment how we stand according to the Estimates with the promised gun programme and its fulfilment. On the 6th August last the First Lord told me in the House that we then required 81 guns over nine inches diameter, and that 45 of these would be delivered by the end of the financial year. According to the First Lord's statement, only 22 guns of the description I am speaking of were delivered in the course of last year. What our exact deficiency is at this moment is it is impossible for me to say, as I have no means of knowing the number of guns delivered since 31st December, and I do not know how many of the older armour clads it is proposed to rearm this year; but so far as I can form an opinion, our arrears of large guns, dealing with the old programme, must be somewhere about 70, and we are making that up at the rate of 22 a year. Now, from the statement of the Secretary of State for War on Monday, I am willing to believe that the rate of delivery will be accelerated; but as he did not distinguish between land and naval service, and I think included the 8-inch gun in his calculations, it is difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion as to when, even on paper, the lee way will be made up. But the Committee will bear in mind that the Secretary for War has to provide a very large number of guns for military ports and coaling stations; the heavy guns required for this programme cannot be less than 100, and these are drawn from the same source as the naval ordnance. If the new naval programme is carried out, we shall require, with reserves, 70 large guns for naval service, above the 70 I have already referred to; but even if it is not adopted in its entirety, we shall still require a considerable number of guns to arm the ships that would be required under the ordinary programme. I urge these considerations on the Committee, as a reason for taking advantage of the present moment, when a large supply of guns is required by both Services, to improve our system, and increase our gun-producing power. The mere addition of Messrs. Vickers to the firms who are to enjoy the monopoly of Government employment, which is all the Secretary for War promises us, is not a sufficient remedy for a deficient supply of guns, and a defective system of administration. I should like some information regarding the Ordnance Vote. In his statement the First Lord says there is a

"serious deficiency" in ordnance stores this is accompanied by a reduction of £400,000 in the Vote, £288,712 of which occurs under the head of projectiles and ammunition. I think this requires some explanation, because even if we get the promised guns, it seems to me we shall be very short of ammunition for them. I have said I would not allude to the new programme, except in so far as it is referred to in the Ordnance Vote. The attitude I take up is this. Whatever the strength of our Navy is, and I desire to see it strong, let it be efficient all round. We ought so to frame our programme that the money granted by Parliament should be expended on all the requirements of the Service. There should be adequate proportion maintained between the outlay on men, on ships, and on guns. But we know we are short of guns, and, as I have said, deficient in ammunition. Would it not be more practical to make our existing Navy efficient before embarking, at any rate to the extent proposed, in the new shipbuilding programme. The cost of armaments has gone up enormously—far more rapidly even than the cost of ships. The armament and fittings of the *Benbow*, with her 12 guns, cost £207,000, the hull and machinery £617,000. Thirty years ago the *Duke of Wellington's* 131 guns, including all their fittings, only cost £17,000. Looking to the enormous increase in the cost of armaments, and they are likely with the development of quick-firing guns to go on increasing, I think it would be a wise course to arm properly the ships we have and lay in a stock of ammunition, before we build more ships to join the large "expectant" squadron, now waiting for their guns, which the present Admiralty have so thoughtfully provided for the protection of our shores. On this matter I think the patience of the country is getting a little exhausted, and before the House grants the present Board of Admiralty a single sixpence, we ought to have definite information on three points—namely, what our calculated output of guns is in the year, the sources from whence the guns are to come, and the penalties to be inflicted on contractors for non-fulfilment of their contracts; and, above all, we ought to insist on a radical change in our Ordnance system. I believe so long as you continue this plan of divided responsibility in spite of the warnings of the ablest officers of both Services, you will be liable to the delays and failures of which you have already had so large an experience; and in addition to that, the Naval Service will be deprived the advantage it ought to possess, of being enabled in its hour of need to rely on the endless mechanical and manufacturing resources of this country.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): In seconding the Motion of the hon. Member for Banffshire (Mr. R. W. Duff), I would point out that his Motion naturally divides itself into two sections, and I am surprised that the Government do not accept the first of these at once, and declare themselves under an obligation to the hon. Member for bringing it forward in such a clear and simple form. The proposition that the First Lord, as representing the Admiralty, should be responsible for all the naval guns has very often been put before the House, and it has always been accepted by the Government in theory, but it seems that it is not acted upon in practice. This House and the country like to know who to hang in case anything goes wrong, and I am sure the First Lord would not object to the responsibility for supplying naval ordnance being definitely fixed upon the Admiralty. At present the responsibility is divided and complicated between the Admiralty, the War Office, and the Ordnance Committee, of whom the great majority are military officers, and when anything goes wrong you have to hunt all the way down, attacking first the First Lord of the Admiralty, who falls back upon the Secretary for War, who again retires upon the Ordnance Committee, who will endeavour to cast the responsibility on the Director General of Ordnance, then there will be an intermediate dispute between naval and military advisers as to who recommended the gun, and by the time responsibility is fixed—if it ever is—the country is tired of the whole question. There is truth in Solomon's maxim that there is safety in a multitude of counsellors, but it is safety for the counsellors, not for those who receive the counsel, for, of course, the counsellors can shift about the responsibility from one to the other. If he consults the safety of the country, I think the noble Lord should accept the

first part of this Resolution. The difficulty with the First Lord is to know to whom to go for advice as to pattern and class of guns. You may say there are very few people capable of giving advice on the subject. Certainly an engineer, if he has studied the subject for eight or ten years and is an able man, may give an opinion and know more about the manufacture of a gun than the man whose business it is to fight the gun. There are very few of these men, and they are mostly connected with the trade, and so are not available to give advice to the First Lord. Then he must rely on military or naval officers. But the ordinary Naval or Artillery officer knows very little indeed about manufacturing guns; his business is to work the guns; and of the Artillery officer, I should say that he knows a great deal more about how a horse is groomed than he does of how a gun is made. In the Navy there is no great opportunity to obtain experience, but there are some officers who have gathered much experience and information from Shoeburyness and on board the *Excellent*. I may mention that the present Director General of Ordnance, quoted by the hon. Member for Banffshire, derived much of his information from Shoeburyness. There is another quarter where the knowledge can be obtained, and that is at the Gun Factory, Woolwich. There are only a limited number of officers employed there, not more than two or three at a time, I think, and probably there are not more than six or eight who have passed through the Factory, and are capable of giving advice as to manufacture. I do not know that there are any Naval officers who have been so employed, but until the First Lord can avail himself of the service of Naval officers, let him attach to his Department Artillery officers, who have the necessary knowledge acquired by experience on the *Excellent* at Shoeburyness and at Woolwich. It would be much better so than that the responsibility of the Admiralty should be weakened by passing through the War Office. As to carriages, Naval officers ought to be far better advisers than Artillery officers, because the naval gun-carriages are of an elaborate character, and worked by steam machinery, whereas there is nothing of the kind with land artillery. The supply of shot and shell is a much simpler matter, and hardly requires elaborate manufacturing knowledge. As to the first part of the Resolution, I have no doubt that all difficulties could be met. It is well to notice that, on any question between good guns and moderately good guns, the best must always go to the Navy. The reasons are obvious, the gun-carriages and arrangements on board ship are elaborate, and calculated to make the best use of the conditions existing on the ship, and it is not possible—as it is, as a rule, on land fortifications—to substitute, say, six moderately good guns for four first-class guns. The Navy must have the precedence in the supply of guns; but under the present system, if naval guns turn out badly, I defy you to say whose fault it is. The Admiralty, the War Office, the Director of Artillery, the Ordnance Committee, would have the blame amongst them; but such an elaborate correspondence would result from an attempt to apportion the blame, that it would require legal training to say where actual responsibility should rest. The second part of the hon. Member's Resolution, I am afraid, the Government will not adopt, for I pressed something of the same kind upon their attention quite lately. There are, no doubt, few firms now who are ready to produce guns, but I imagine if you tell them you are going to lay out a million or two on gun contracts, thrown open to general competition, there would be no difficulty about raising the capital to set up the necessary machinery, and anyone accustomed to working steel would, in a short time, produce good guns, though not perhaps equal to those of Krupp. I need hardly enlarge upon the advantages of open competition—how you would at once get rid of the suspicions and innuendos that it was influence brought to bear on officials that secured this or that contract; and how you would sometimes get guns even below market price, because there are times when it would pay a manufacturer, in order to keep his plant going and his staff together, to work at cost price. Of course the manufacturer will look forward to recoup himself when a large or sudden demand arises. But the idea of the manufacturer under the system of restricted competition seems to be that he is always to get his 15 or 20 per cent from a Government order, and when the

pressure comes he may get over 100 per cent. This is not the usual practice of large manufacturers, who are content sometimes to forego their profits, seeing their gain in the long run from transactions over a long period. I hope the Government will even accept the second part of the Resolution, perhaps in a modified form, but as to the first part I do not see why they should not at once adopt it.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "in the opinion of this House, the Admiralty ought to assume the entire responsibility of providing guns and ordnance stores for the Naval Service, and that the delivery of guns would be accelerated, and the gun-producing power of the Country developed, if the private trade, as recommended by the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee, dated 11th November 1886, were more largely resorted to than at present for the supply of guns and ordnance stores,"—(*Mr. Duff,*)

—instead thereof.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Gentleman who opened this discussion used some very strong language about the present Board of Admiralty, while he used some complimentary epithets in reference to the Board to which he belonged. Now it struck me that although the hon. Gentleman used this strong language he did not display intimate knowledge of his subject. The hon. and gallant Gentleman who seconded the Motion does know his subject; he is a thorough artillerist and knows what the difficulties are. Let me state those difficulties in a few words. There have been many Committees, Commissions, and Conferences on this question of supplying warlike stores, but although there have been many different recommendations and much diversity of opinion displayed as to the administration of the Ordnance Department, they have been absolutely unanimous on this point, that all guns or stores, whether for the Army or Navy, should be uniform in pattern and interchangeable. That is the guiding principle that the hon. Gentleman ignores. He asks us to imitate France, where they have guns differing in design and not interchangeable between Army and Navy, and separate stocks of stores and ammunition for each service. This is what I think the House would never tolerate, that we, with our possessions and interests scattered all over the world, should have at our different stations two supplies of stores, one for our naval and the other for our land forces. No one disputes the fact that guns should be interchangeable, and it follows that there can be only one Designing Department, not one for the War Office and one for the Admiralty. The hon. Member, in moving his Motion, has censured the Admiralty because they have not adopted the decision of the Conference. Now, the decision of the Conference was to refer the matter of stores to a Committee.

*MR. R. W. DUFF: I must take exception to that statement. The Conference adopted the principle laid down by General Alderson that the Admiralty should make their own contracts for naval stores.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: A Conference was appointed, and the Conference recommended that a Committee should be appointed, and the Committee arrived at the conclusion that the Admiralty should not make separate contracts so far as guns, gunpowder, projectiles, and other stores were concerned. In paragraph 10, page 4, the Committee distinctly recommends the very system now in force. The hon. Member laughs. Has he the smallest estimation of the quantity of stores which are not interchangeable. It is infinitesimal. What I have quoted is the result of the Conference appointed by the Board of Admiralty, to which the hon. Member belonged, and it is that at which the hon. Member laughs. I contend that the present Board has done identically what, if the hon. Member had been in office, he would have been compelled to do. The hon. Member went further and said there were certain members on the Board of Admiralty, notably Admiral Hopkins, who agreed in his view. The hon. Member is utterly in error. Admiral Hopkins is Controller of the Navy, and he entirely dissents from the hon. Member.

*MR. DUFF: I read his evidence in support of my views before Sir James Stephen's Commission.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The hon. Member may have referred to his evidence, but as against that I had

myself the advantage of a conversation with the Controller of the Navy this morning, and he said he entirely dissented from the view advanced by the hon. Gentleman, and for the reason I have stated, that the Admiralty would not undertake to order guns unless they had a special department for designs. The fact is, there are very few persons in this country who can design heavy guns. The hon. Member has so little idea of the difficulties attending the manufacture of guns that he proposes to put them on the same footing as the hulls of ships and machinery but there is all the difference in the world between the cases. If your engines do not come up to test, you can make a reduction in the amount of money paid to the contractor, and you still have ships which will be able to drive at a certain speed. If a hull is not satisfactory, the result probably will be that the vessel will go a knot or two less. But if a gun does not work it will in all probability burst, and then what is to be done?

MR. DUFF: Reject it.

LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes, but the rejection of the gun affects all the guns made on this principle, and the hon. Member does not appear to understand that. There is an insuperable difficulty in the way of establishing two designing Departments, one for the Army and one for the Navy, and, as a matter of fact, there is no alternative between the present system and the establishment of a separate Ordnance Department. It seems to be a great reflection upon this country that there should be a considerable number of ships waiting for their guns, and I can quite understand the hon. Gentleman's wish to make some practical suggestion by which the difficulties can be obviated, but it is quite clear his recommendation would aggravate the evil. There is not much difficulty in obtaining small guns, but we cannot entrust firms, who have had no experience, with the making of the heaviest ordnance. They must learn their business gradually. To go into the market for great guns might be to put into the hands of inexperienced firms the manufacture of guns which it is almost impossible to assume they could produce. As to the second part of the proposition, I quite agree with the hon. and gallant Member that we ought to do everything in our power to increase the sources of supply; but that is a work which must be done gradually. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War has been very successful in getting existing firms to extend their works, and also in getting fresh firms to undertake the business, and by distributing the work amongst different firms he has been able to get a considerably larger amount of work done during the past year than previously. It may interest the House to know what has been the delivery of guns during the past three years. There have been delivered to the Naval Service during the three years ending 1st April, 1889, 594 guns above 4-inch calibre; of the guns required to be delivered in the year 1889-90 there are 235 over 4-inch, all of which have been ordered. In addition to that, there are 269 guns which will be required before 1st April, 1891, if the shipbuilding proposals of the Government are assented to. It is estimated that all will be practically completed within two years, leaving only 48 incomplete at the end of that time. Past experience, however, should not make us over-sanguine that they will be delivered to the exact date named. I can assure the Committee that the Board of Admiralty are not in the slightest degree inclined to shirk the responsibility which legitimately attaches to them of supplying the Navy with guns; but they could not undertake the responsibility of designing them. If we had gone into the open market, there would have been two of us—ourselves and the War Department—competing against each other, and, in all probability, driving up prices. Many of the difficulties which have hitherto attended the manufacture and delivery of these guns are being solved, and I believe that, if we continued on the lines we are pursuing, we shall gradually surmount these difficulties, and, at the same time, improve our guns. I hope the House will, by a large majority, reject the proposals of the hon. Member, which would only aggravate the trouble we wish to cure.

*LORD C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): I quite agree with the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty as to the immense difficulty of the question, but I do not see why the difficulty should

not be faced. I think the remarks of my noble Friend have wandered away from the question. This state of things undoubtedly does exist—that we have many ships without guns—and the noble Lord is not over-sanguine that the demand which will be made for guns in time to come will be readily met. We want to know whether that demand will be met, and that is a point the country also wants to know. We ought to have, first of all, a sufficient number of guns for immediate use; then we want enough to re-arm the Fleet; and we want to know how many guns there are in the Reserve. The life of a heavy gun, now-a-days, is very short, owing, probably, to the enormous explosive power of the new powder, and we have frequently to relieve the guns, which renders it necessary that we shall have an efficient Reserve. From a Return of the ships waiting for their guns, as at May of last year, I find that there are eight ships which, in the aggregate, are short of 78 guns. I wish to know how many of those ships are still waiting for their guns? On another point I will ask the First Lord if he has now any orders out to supply the place of the obsolete guns—the wrought-iron guns with steel linings. The new gun manufactured in this country since 1885 is a good gun—as good a gun as is to be found in Europe; but before 1885 the guns were neither good in material nor manufacture. In the matter of reserve of guns, the present system is wrong. For instance, when the *Amiral Duperré* burst a gun, its place was supplied in a few weeks; but when the *Colossus* burst a gun many months elapsed before she got another, simply because there is no reserve guns. Why is this? The right hon. Gentleman does as his Predecessors did—the best he can do under the present system; which is nothing. On the question of liners there is a generally wrong impression. The French, German, and Italian Governments do not use them—why I do not know, as the result will be that they will have to get rid of their guns before they are very old, which will cost an enormous amount of money; but the British Government do use liners, and, by putting them into guns to some extent disabled by erosion, we make the guns as good as new. This is a good system; and I do not understand the statement of the First Lord in regard to it—namely,

> "The delay (in the production of guns) is due to the faulty principle adopted with regard to a number of the guns in replacing liners."

That rather implies that he does not approve of liners; but we must have liners in the guns when they are eroded. I have seen recently at Woolwich a gun which is to have a new liner shipped with it; so that at sea the old liner can be blown out and a new one put in its place. This is a new system, and only shows what a great deal has to be learnt by our sailors nowadays. At one time our seamen were supposed to be useful to us on account of the smartness with which they could reef topsails, but in the present day they are to be distinguished for their ability in taking out old liners and putting in new ones. The present system of gun manufacture is very unfair to the manufacturer, largely on account of the financial year system. Guns, as well as ships, ought to be carried straight through to completion and paid for at once, thus assisting the manufacturer, and enabling the country to get what it wants. The manufacturer at present has to wait for orders, and then has to complete them within a certain date; and when the workmanship is hurried the result is apt not to be good. They cannot get continuity of orders, and accordingly, with such plant as they have, they cannot afford to take all the orders that the Government can give them. They are compelled either to discharge men or to work for foreign Governments. This brings about the condition of things in which British manufacturers are working very largely for foreign Governments, while the British Government is itself waiting for guns. This matter requires to be looked into; and I also think the matter of delivery should be worked out better. Krupp always guarantees to turn out his heavy guns, running up to 14 in., at the rate of one month for every inch of calibre. That is not what we do in this country or anything near it. Probably remarks will be made on the opposite side of the House about the great expenditure on guns. But in reply I will ask, first, whether the country is to be defended or not? And next, I will point out that the steel gun manufactured since 1885 is a cheaper gun than any other

heavy gun in Europe. The French guns of over 9-in. calibre cost £320 per ton; the Krupp guns cost £240 per ton; and the English guns since 1885 cost only £200 per ton. If the services are to have guns at all, the country cannot afford to supply such as will be inferior to those brought against them. As to the Committees to which the noble Lord referred, there have been no actual practical results from them, although, no doubt, a great many things have been inquired into. My noble Friend, I see, dissents from this statement, but if we have not sufficient guns for our ships, surely I am justified in saying that there have been no practical results. What I ask is, will the supply in future equal the demand? The noble Lord said he was not sanguine that he would be able to get guns up to date. That is all nonsense. We must get the guns up to date. If it takes longer to make them put the date further back; but have the guns up to that date. Every Committee which has sat to consider this question has come to the sound common-sense conclusion that we must have one pattern for the Army and Navy. That is necessary in order that we can transfer guns from ships to fortresses and *vice versâ* where necessary. The Committee of 1887 forming the subject of Paper 259 reported that

"The funds allotted by Parliament from time to time for the production of ordnance for the Navy have been diverted to other purposes;"

that,

"No organization has existed or yet exists by which the gun-producing resources of the country can be developed so as to meet the requirements;"

that the Admiralty

"Have no information as to the number of rounds of ammunition in store for the various guns or as to the available stock of tubes, &c., or how much the stock of warlike material has been increased or diminished from year to year;"

and that

"The Admiralty receives no account of the money spend on guns for the Navy."

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE, Lincolnshire, Horncastle): That has been altered.

LORD C. BERESFORD: I am glad to hear that. It came out most distinctly the other day in debate that the Admiralty ordered a large number of quick firing guns and refused to allow ammunition for them. This is the sort of thing that must be continually brought before the public if any alteration in the system is to be effected. Will the noble Lord kindly make a note of the point, as I should like to have an answer? Another remark made was that the late Financial Secretary to the War Office pointed out that either the Admiralty asked a great deal too much, or the War Department gave too little. Fancy such a thing as that taking place with regard to the supply of guns. The Committee in their Report also say that:

"The Administration as it now exists has been pronounced by most competent authorities to be one of 'dangerous divided responsibility,' which will probably lead to disaster in the event of war,"

and

"in the interest of the public service a radical change is imperatively demanded."

I think the French system is the best that can be adopted, but I would be the last to recommend it to the House, because it would involve a very large expenditure, and I think it better to utilize what we have got; but on the other hand the system does not work well. There is a great deal of irritation between the two services, and I believe the thing will never work well until we get for the supply of guns a Department independent both of the War Office and the Admiralty. I would have the Department formed of soldiers, sailors, engineers, and others, but presided over by a civilian. Such a Department would see in a moment where the guns ought to be supplied, whether to the Army or the Navy, and somebody would always be responsible, whereas under the present system it is impossible to bring responsibility home to anybody. As far as the hon. Gentleman's Resolution goes I cannot agree with the first part of it, but I entirely agree with the second part, and I think the hon. Member has rendered a most valuable service in bringing the matter before the House.

*SIR W. PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton): I cannot help thinking that the Resolution of my hon. Friend (Mr. Duff) has been productive of an extremely useful discussion. My hon. Friend expressed a desire that the Admiralty should assume the entire respon-

sibility of providing guns and stores for the Naval Service, and upon that point we have received a very happy, practical suggestion from the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford). It is admitted that at present our supply of guns is insufficient. According to the Secretary of State's Memorandum, the amount of deficiencies of Ordnance Stores in the Naval service has been ascertained. The deficiencies are said to be serious, but it is hoped by the right hon. Gentleman they may be made up gradually in the course of the next three years. But, if we are to have the same system in force as hitherto, which is very likely, we shall be landed in a still worse dilemma. Dealing with this particular point, the Army Estimates Committee say in their Report,—

"The evidence as to the responsibility of the various officials for the design and manufacture of guns is somewhat conflicting, nor can it be positively asserted that there would be much more facility in the future for fixing the responsibility for the failure of the guns on any officials than has been the case in the past."

Now that, I understand, is the system to which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War has just referred as having been the result of an alteration which has taken place. It is not a satisfactory system, and the sooner it is done away with the better. The proposal of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone would meet the difficulty. We find there, at all events, an independent department which would meet the requirements of both the Services, and which would be responsible to the country for any deficiencies which existed in its work. The noble Lord observed that interchangeability was at the bottom of the present difficulty. The noble Lord forgets, I think, that if you once obtain a good design there should be no reasonable difficulty in securing interchangeability. It is essential that the design should be uniform, and then interchangeability must follow. If you once allow that your independent department shall be a department of design as well as of construction your interchangeability ought to be secure. The noble Lord also said that one of the great difficulties in the preparation and construction of great guns by private firms was that if one of the guns supplied was found to be faulty, the whole of the guns of that pattern would have to be rejected. Surely that is not the case. Each gun would depend upon its own test. Now, I should like to obtain from the First Lord of the Admiralty some definite information as to the question of deficiencies of Ordnance Stores. What is the amount of the deficiency; and when can the deficiency be made good? Further, is the noble Lord really satisfied that he can obtain the guns for the Navy by the time they will be required? If he is not satisfied on this point, would it not be well to make other arrangements than those he contemplates?

MR. E. STANHOPE: Mr. Speaker, I think the last two speeches show how inconvenient it is to discuss these matters on the Motion to go into Committee. It is perfectly obvious that the proper time to discuss these questions is when the Gun Vote is brought forward, but, nevertheless, I will endeavour to answer the remarks which have been made. The real question to solve is who is to be the authority responsible for providing guns for the Navy. It must be either one of the two Departments concerned, or the War Office acting as agent for the Admiralty, or a totally separate Department such as the noble Lord has suggested, and has often before been suggested, and as often rejected. The noble Lord said something with regard to the establishment of a separate Ordnance Department; but the mere description given of this Department by my noble Friend proves at once that it will involve an enormous increase of cost. If such a Department is desired the country will have first to consider whether it will be prepared to bear that large increase of cost; and, secondly, whether it will get better results than under the existing system. A good deal of difficulty will arise with reference to the relations of a separate Ordnance Department with the War Office and the Admiralty. Both of these Departments will have the privilege of ordering their stores from the Ordnance Department, and both Departments will in turn squeeze it. The Secretary for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty will be certain to find fault with what the head of the Ordnance Department does, and the position of the last-named official, whom the noble Lord says should

be a civilian, will be an extremely difficult one if he is not a Member either of the House of Lords or the House of Commons, and able to defend himself whenever occasion arises. The establishment of such a Department will certainly not meet one of the greatest difficulties connected with the Department—namely, that the work supplied should be such as to receive the approval of the Service using it. It seems to me, therefore, that the House will be incurring a great risk if it attempts to establish such a Department as this, because it will not be a remedy for the difficulty in which we are at present placed. We must either have the Admiralty ordering its own guns or the War Office acting as the agent of the Admiralty ordering the guns for the Navy as well as for itself. The Committee of 1886 in their Report condemned the system under which the whole Vote for the warlike stores of the Army and the Navy was placed in the Army Votes, so that the demands put forward by the Government as necessary for the proper armament of the Fleet were afterwards cut down by someone who was not responsible. All the points against which the recommendations of the Committee were urged are now things of the past, and last year a system was substituted under which the responsibility for the Naval Vote has been shifted to the Admiralty. Something has been said as to the desirableness of fixing the responsibility for the failures of warlike stores. I think the Government have made themselves clear to the House on that point. There are several things which have to be thought of with regard to guns. First of all, there is the design, the pattern, the manufacture and the proof. The responsibility for the design of the gun now rests absolutely with the Ordnance Committee, a body of experts composed of military, naval, and civilian elements. When the pattern of the gun is decided upon the gun is put out to manufacture either at the gun factory or by a private firm. It is then inspected by the War Office, partly on its own account and partly on behalf of the Admiralty, before it is passed into the service; and if the gun does not pass the examination it is rejected and sent back to the manufacturer. The question has also been raised of giving to the trade more orders for warlike stores than hitherto. It is true that in 1880 the trade was exceedingly little employed for the manufacture of heavy guns and warlike stores. In 1880-1 the value of big guns given out to the private manufacturer was £4,812: in 1883-4, £23,000; in 1886-7, £67,000, and this all went to Elswick. I am not surprised that the Committee has recommended that it was exceedingly desirable steps should be taken to utilize more the gun-producing powers of the country. What has happened since? On the 13th of March last the value of the guns entrusted to Messrs. Armstrong is £387,000, to Whitworths £258,000, and to Messrs. Vickers £114,000. These figures shows that the Government have called upon the trade to an enormous extent for the manufacture of big guns. [An hon. MEMBER: It was not open competition.] Messrs. Vickers's contract was obtained by open competition. There are several other firms which supply the forgings of the guns, as distinct from the building and completing of them; and there are a large number of firms in the country which supply other warlike stores for the Army and the Navy. The orders for warlike stores in 1888-9 given to the private trade for the sea service alone amounted to £1,063,000. The House will, therefore, see that we have advanced enormously in the direction of entrusting this work to the trade; and, so far from desiring to give existing firms a monopoly of the work at present being done, I, for my part, say at once that the War Office are determined to get the guns made in the time in which they are required. Whether we give orders to those firms or to other firms, we are equally determined that the orders shall be carried out. I hope that in a year or two we may even be able to talk about guns waiting for ships; but I am, at all events, satisfied that we shall be able to make arrangements by which, with a reasonable amount of certainty, we shall be able to insure that all the guns now required for the service of the Fleet will be obtained within the specified time. I speak with full responsibility on this subject, because I am the person who has to take the full responsibility for putting out the orders, and taking care that they are placed in such a manner

that they will be completed in due time. Passing from these special points, the noble Lord spoke of foreign and of English guns, and asked one or two questions concerning Messrs. Krupp's method and the time required in turning out a completed gun. Well, I have hope that we shall be able to better it here. We have every reason to believe that in our gun factories we can produce some guns, for instance the 9·2 inch, at a quicker rate than that mentioned by my noble Friend. My noble Friend asks several special questions about gun construction. He spoke of the erosion that occurs in our guns, and from which foreign guns are free.

*Lord C. BERESFORD: I beg pardon; I never said anything of the kind. There must always be erosion, no matter where manufactured. What I said was, we relieve our guns, which Foreign Governments did not do.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Then I need not refer to erosion, as to which I have several facts that show that it occurs often more largely in foreign-made guns than in our own. I have given much attention to a comparison between the guns in our service and those of France and Germany, and I have had caused a most careful comparison to be made between the guns of similar calibres in different services, their power of penetration by projectiles, and the general power of the guns; and the conclusion to which I venture to come after very close examination is that our guns are distinctly better than those of the French Service, and equal at least to the guns of the German Service. The noble Lord has asked me a question with respect to the ships which have unfortunately been without their guns in the past, and I am perfectly ready to give my noble Friend the information I possess with respect to the ships which were waiting for their guns as presented to Parliament last year. The first ship was the *Collingwood*, which now has four 12-inch guns on board. I am glad to say that in the case of the *Howe*, her four 13·5-inch guns will be in course of proof next month, and, therefore, ought to be on board at the end of April or the beginning of May. The guns of the *Camperdown* will be all delivered this month. The *Anson* has all her guns on board. The *Undaunted* has her two 9·2-inch guns complete. The *Australia* has ten 6-inch guns on board, and two 9·2-inch guns have been received and are now probably on board. The *Narcissus* has ten 6-inch guns on board, and two 9·2-inch guns will be completed this month. In the case of the *Galatea*, I am sorry to say there has been a block. The 9·2-inch guns due from the Messrs. Whitworth and Cain have not been delivered, and I am afraid that they cannot be relied on till the 31st of August next; but ten 6-inch guns are on board. The *Immortalité* has all her guns on board. Therefore, all the ships which I have enumerated, with the exception of the *Galatea*, either have all their guns on board or will have them in a very short period. In addition to that, the Admiralty have brought forward two ships that were not on the above list—namely, the *Victoria* and the *Sanspareil*. In both of those cases we have had expedited the guns of the largest description—namely, the 16·25-inch. The *Victoria's* guns are ready and at proof; while those of the *Sanspareil* are mostly ready, and the biggest will be ready in April. I think I have now answered my noble Friend fully and satisfactorily as to all the ships which he has mentioned. If any additional questions are put I shall be glad to answer them also; but there is some difficulty in doing so until we get into Committee.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided: — Ayes 109; Noes 51.—(Division List, No. 19.)

Main Question again proposed.

Sir G. CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I have not much to say in reference to my Motion, which I am precluded from moving because I put forward my views at some length the other day on the Military Vote. The principle I then laid down and desire to press upon the House is, that we should have wholly in view the entire proposals of the Government and the expenditure the country will be called upon to incur for the whole system of defence proposed. I did not, on the last occasion, obtain that satisfactory answer I hoped for from Her Majesty's Government, and it seems to me all the more clear, since the debate the other night, that the Government are pro-

ceeding, by way of increasing the Services, bit by bit, without showing all their hand. Take, for instance, the question of barrack accommodation. It seems it is absolutely necessary there should be a complete review of barrack accommodation, and a re-organization at great expense will have to be undertaken. But this has not been included in the Estimates laid before us. There also ought to be a better organization of the Auxiliary Land and Marine Forces, and these might reasonably claim the funds that are necessary to make them thoroughly efficient. We are called upon by a few Votes to increase the Regular Forces of the Army and Navy; but the Government have not taken the nation into full confidence. As regards the Naval Estimates, the immediate subject of our consideration, we know that in the ordinary Votes there is a large increase, and we also know that a special Vote will be submitted for contracts for a large addition to the Navy, but we have not yet learned from the statement of the First Lord how that Navy is to be employed. I know that it is a large subject, the protection of our Colonies and commerce all over the world, and this will involve a large dispersion of our Naval Force. Then we have not heard what is to be the expenditure incurred on coast defence to meet danger at home. Some suggestions, it is true, have been dropped; for instance, that we are to rely a good deal upon sub-marine batteries. This is all very well as one of the incidents of coast defence, but I do not believe that this will afford security. When the Government come to tackle this question of coast defence, rely upon it, we shall find ourselves involved in grave additional expenditure. I want to know, if we agree to this great addition to the Navy, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to rely on the Navy alone as a means of defence for the British coasts, or whether it is to be only the first line of defence, and that further expenditure will be necessary on coast defences? The other day, when I referred to this subject, the exposure of our shores to naval attack, the Under Secretary taunted me with having the desire to make Kirkcaldy a first-class military port. Now, I suggested nothing of the kind. But this I do believe—that if our coasts are to be made secure, it is absolutely necessary that we should incur considerable additional expense in each locality, and for ports all round the coast, by placing guns in position to protect those ports against occasional marauding attacks of hostile vessels. Guns, men, and *matériel* are required to meet such an unfortunate contingency; and I am forced to the conclusion that this naval expenditure is but the first line of defence, and I am unwilling to vote this large increase until we know what is the whole of the Government plan of defence. An important question is to be raised by the right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), which very much dovetails with the remarks I would make. The Motion of which the right hon. Gentleman has given notice, and upon which he is not here just now to speak, has relation to what took place in the course of the Naval Manœuvres last year. What I understand the right hon. Gentleman wishes to know is, do Her Majesty's Government, by the series of sham attacks on defenceless towns, mean to recognize that it is part of the system of legitimate warfare that towns should be attacked, bombarded, burned, and sacked, or laid under contribution? It seems very like it. We remember how the town of Greenock was subjected to a sham attack during the hours of Divine Service on a Sunday morning. I think, in relation to the subject of coast defence, we should know what are the views of Her Majesty's Government on this matter, and I think it is a little unfortunate that the Naval Authorities should by their action have suggested that this is the kind of thing to be done. If Her Majesty's Government are satisfied that, in the opinion of civilized Europe, these attacks on unprotected towns are within the rights of a belligerent, I do not see how large additional expenditure on coast defence is to be avoided, and I claim from the Government a complete *exposé* of the defensive scheme they would propose.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and agreed to.

Supply—considered in the Committee.

(In the Committee.)

NAVY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

(1.) £45,000, Miscellaneous Services.

NAVY ESTIMATES.

(2.) 65,400 Men and Boys, including 14,000 Marines, for Sea and Coast Guard Services.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,201,700, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the expense of Wages, &c to Officers, Seamen, and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890."

*Lord C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): I desire to bring to the notice of the Committee a case in which I myself take great interest, and in which the whole Service takes great interest — that is to say, the case of the engineers of the Royal Navy. In the Naval Service it is very hard for any class of officers and men to get their grievances brought before the country and the Admiralty, as an instance of which I need only refer to the question as to the pay of lieutenants which occurred whilst I was at the Admiralty. The lieutenants in the Service knew that there was no way of getting their grievances brought before the Admiralty except by getting it mentioned in Parliament. No doubt these officers for a large number of years were suffering under a considerable grievance, and they had a right to expect that those whose duty it was to watch their interests at the Admiralty should take their case in hand. But years went on and nothing at all was done. I draw attention to this matter, because it is very likely that the same thing will happen with regard to the engineers, who merely ask that they shall receive the same pay as others of the same rank in the Service—as paymasters and doctors. No doubt the doctors are a very able body of officers, and no doubt also the paymasters perform a very useful function, but there is no parallel between these classes and the engineers. Every officer who takes his ship into action wants to win, and if there is one man more than another who can help him in his desire, it is the man in charge of the engine-room. In the old days it was the seaman that did the most for you, but now it is the engineer who has charge of the engines and in some cases who has charge of the heavy machinery which enables you to fire and load your guns. I certainly think the time has come when the case of these officers should be carefully thought out at the Admiralty. I am satisfied that those who belong to the medical and Paymaster's branches will be the first to acknowledge that their branches are not such as to enable a commander to win an action, and are not of the same importance as the duties of the engineer. Now the engineers in this matter have done nothing contrary to the regulations of the Service. They have awakened to the fact that their position is not what it should be, and I trust that their case will receive attention to-night, as it is one of great merit. I trust the time will soon arrive when ships' companies will be constituted in such a manner as to be adapted to modern requirements, and one of the first things to be done it seems to me is to put the engineers in their proper place—to pay them and give them rank according to their duties. If I do not receive a satisfactory answer from my noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty, I shall be obliged to take other measures to secure one.

*Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): I beg very cordially to support what has fallen from the noble Lord as to the engineers, and I must say I am very much surprised at no answer having been given the other day by the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty to a question asked by the hon. Member for Portsmouth, who asked if he would grant a Committee to consider the case of the engineer officers. The noble Lord is reported to have said—

"I am not aware that great dissatisfaction exists among the officers of the engineer's branch of the Royal Navy as regards their rank and emolument, neither has any representation to that effect been made to me through the proper channels of communication."

I am surprised at that answer, as I myself put a question of the same nature last Session. In regard to the statement that no representation has been made to the Admiralty through the proper channels of communication I am at a loss to know what more proper channel of communication there could be for the grievances of these

gentlemen than that of bringing them to the attention of the Government through their representatives in this House. It cannot be to the interest of the Service that a large body of officers of this kind should have any grievance unredressed and uninquired into. The duties and responsibilities of these men have enormously increased during the last 20 years, and there is now scarcely anything connected with the management of a man-of-war in which their services are not absolutely indispensable. No doubt the duties of doctors and paymasters are important, but when you compare these gentlemen with the engineers it must be admitted that the latter have every right to equality as to rank and pay. I am informed that the maximum pay of an engineer officer of the Royal Navy afloat is 22s. a-day as against 33s. in the case of a medical officer of the same rank. If that is so, I think it is an inequality which should be redressed. As to rank there were certainly some concessions made in 1886, but I believe that the engineers feel it rather a worthless and invidious distinction, being allowed to rank with, but after, officers of the Medical Service.

*ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I think, looking at the numberless engines we now put into our ships, everyone must admit the immense importance of the functions of the engineers. Their case, and that also of the engine room artificers, should be considered by the Government, and I hope now that Her Majesty's Fleet is about to be so largely increased, that attention will be paid to these classes. Then with regard to another most valuable part of the Service—I mean the signal men—I am glad to see that some notice has been taken of them. The signal men of the present day may be said to be second only in importance to the engineers in so far as taking the ship into action is concerned. The Admiral and the Captain of each ship must depend upon the signalman, and nowadays the signalman has, for his class, to be a highly-educated man. I trust that when the school for the training of signalmen is established it will be started on a liberal scale, and that not only signalling, but telegraphy, will be taught, as it is extremely important that some of these men should be able to read off messages and transmit messages on shore—say in an enemy's country.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): No doubt the noble Lord knows enough about the Naval Service to appreciate the importance of this subject of signalling. The method of signalling in the Navy at the present time is precisely that which was in use a century and a-half ago. It was an admirable method, no doubt, in former times, when fleets moved comparatively slowly, but I believe it is altogether inadequate to carry out the wishes and views of Naval Commanders at the present time when ships are in action. It may be said that it is little use pointing out a difficulty unless at the same time a method is suggested for getting over it. Well, my view is that semaphores placed at the mast-head might be very advantageously employed. Some attention was given to this matter in 1887, and I think the matter is worthy of closer investigation, and probably the noble Lord will be good enough to broach the subject to his naval advisers. Another point of some importance is that of the steaming lights carried to mark the ship's position at night. I am informed that in the merchant service the electric light is used with very good results, and I would suggest to the noble Lord that experiments should be tried in Her Majesty's Navy to see whether electricity could not with advantage replace the miserable oil lamps at present in use. Another matter I should like to mention is that collisions are often caused by the reluctance of young officers to alter the course of the vessel in good time, because altering the course is looked upon with great dislike by the captain, and is extremely inconvenient for the purpose of navigation. Therefore a young officer is very apt to maintain his course to the last possible moment. When I first took charge of a ship as first officer of the watch I did not know the simplest rule of the road, but as I happened by accident to answer correctly the simplest question in the whole code, which was the one put to me by the captain, I was allowed to take charge of the ship. That which occurred in my own case, I know, from my experience in examining young officers, happens now, and young officers are often extraordinarily

ignorant of the rules of the road. I would strongly recommend the First Lord of the Admiralty to insist upon a stricter inquiry being made into their fitness to undertake responsible and important duties. It would be worth while, I think, to inquire also whether corrosion has taken place in the condensers of other ships beside the *Thunderer*. With regard to the *personnel* of the Navy, I would draw attention to the fact that a very large number of boys, who bear an excellent character up to the time of their reaching the age of 18, lapsed during the next four or five years, into the most indifferent character, and create in that time a very considerable percentage of the "crime," or rather offences in the Navy. They could be kept in better discipline if they were for a time rated as "second-class ordinary seamen." Boys in the Navy are kept under strict discipline, but men in the Navy are not, and I think it would be of great advantage both to men and boys if stricter discipline were maintained amongst the second-class ordinary seamen. That is one of the greatest blots on our system, as it is at the ages of from 18 to 22 or 23 that our young seamen stand most in need of strict discipline, and when a large percentage of the offences committed by our sailors are perpetrated. I have begun with the lowest class of our blue-jackets—the boys—and will now turn to the highest. The difficulty we have experienced for many years is the difficulty of getting suitable men to rate as petty officers. During recent years I have not unfrequently seen men made petty officers who were not at all suited to the position, simply because there was no one else to take. In my opinion the real character of the petty officer comes out better when you see him discharging the disagreeable, slow, and monotonous duties he has to perform on board a man-of-war. It is that that tries the character of the man, and shows whether he is worth much or little; and not when he is under the exceptional excitement and advantages of active service. I must say that I think it greatly to be regretted that we cannot get, upon the whole, better men than we now have for such positions. In my opinion the advantages now held out are not sufficient, I will not say, to secure the best men, but to persuade the men to keep up to the standard required in those who are made petty officers. I would suggest to my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty that it would, at any rate, be worth his while to take into consideration whether he cannot decrease the number of grades amongst the petty officers and at the same time increase the advantages held out to them. One of the attractions offered is a rating which is now totally useless. It was originally given to men who were specially superior in matters of seamanship; but there is no advantage in maintaining it now. They were not originally intended to be made petty officers, but owing to a certain superiority they exhibited they were called on to do duty as petty officers. My idea is that it would better if the grades were reduced to two, and the advantages were made more substantial than they now are Under existing circumstances, if we rate a man as a petty officer and he is found to be unsuitable, we cannot disrate him and put him back into his original rank without blasting his career; and this I regard as very unsatisfactory. It is always difficult to tell how a man will turn out, and captains are very slow to ruin a man's prospects by taking away a rating to which he has been promoted. There ought to be some method of trying a man before he is put into a higher grade, and I shall be very glad if my noble Friend can see his way, at any rate, to make inquiry into the matter. I scarcely know whether I should be in order in passing from this general survey to the question of rations. I think I notice that you, Sir, hesitate to permit this, and, therefore, I will reserve what I have to say on that subject for a future occasion. I will merely add that the four subjects I have brought under the attention of the Committee, and which I am afraid must be regarded as of a somewhat technical character, are matters which I trust will receive the consideration of my noble Friend.

*Mr. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire): I have only one or two questions to ask upon this Vote. I am glad to see from the statement that the First Lord of the Admiralty proposes to increase the number of stokers. The *personnel* of the Navy is apparently weak in stokers, and, therefore, it is well there should be

an increase in that class. I see it is also proposed to add another 1,100 Marines, but I notice in the Estimate that only £18,000 represents the increase in the Marine Vote, and I wish to know if that amount will cover the cost of the proposed increase in the force? I also should like to know whether any of these Marines are to be added to the artillery branch?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No.

*MR. DUFF: Then we are told in the noble Lord's statement that the number of seamen has been increased, but I see that there is to be a decrease of 555 in the number of boys. I dare say that that is quite capable of explanation, but on the face of it, it hardly seems natural, for one would expect to find, with an increase in the number of men, a proportionate increase in the number of boys. I do not want to offer any opposition to this Vote, but I should be glad to have some information on these point.

*MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid.): I would like to say a few words in support of the request put forward by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, and supported by my hon. Friend the Member for Pembroke, that the Admiralty should give serious consideration to the claims of engineer officers. It seems difficult, I admit, for men having no practical experience or knowledge of the Navy to speak on this matter, but I take it that owing to the development of scientific warfare, the responsibilities of this branch of the service have greatly increased, and it is curious to note that the number of engineers has been diminished, while their pay is apparently not at all commensurate with the importance of their duties. I would like to ask how it is that there are 178 engineers down in the Effective Vote, and 220 on retired pay? I cannot understand that at all. I do not think it is a wise move on the part of the Government to reduce the number of engineers, and I have a shrewd suspicion that if the whole truth concerning the Navy could be placed before us—if we could have the evidence of responsible officers such as is placed before the Board of Admiralty, we should see that there is a very different state of things in the Navy, especially so far as its *personnel* is concerned, from that which is now laid before us, and we should see also that the condition of things is far from satisfactory. I have heard from a good many officers that the number of officers for Service in the Navy is far from adequate, and scarcely sufficient for its proper working; that, if some of our ships should be engaged in action, and there should be a considerable loss of officers, many of our vessels would, as a consequence, be hopelessly undermanned. In regard to the engineers, I think that the number should not only be ample, but that the pay should be sufficiently remunerative, and I hope that the First Lord of the Admiralty will give us an assurance that something will be done, not only to increase the pay, but to place the status of these officers on a satisfactory basis. At present, so far as I can understand, the seniority which they are supposed to possess is more fictitious than real, and, seeing that these officers practically have the working of the ships in their hands, it is time that this matter was attended to. In the mercantile marine these officers are especially well paid. I should like to know whether it is a fact that when the Russian scare of 1878 occurred, and it was found necessary to increase the number of our engineer officers, we were obliged to pay them higher rates than were received by the engineers already in the service of the Navy? If so, I think that is a most unsatisfactory state of things. I hope the time will shortly arrive when the First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to state to the country the actual opinions of his advisers, not only with regard to the Navy, but with regard to the number of ships and the necessary ordnance to make them effective. Comparing the statements which we have had from the Front Bench during the last three years with that which we had presented to us the other night, it seems to me impossible to believe that we have had before us an adequate representation of the knowledge as to the Navy which is in the possession of the representatives of the Admiralty. The statements of those three years are glaringly inconsistent with the one made this year. I desire, of course, to acknowledge to the fullest degree the admirable advances which have been made under the present administration of the Admiralty; but,

bearing in mind the assurances we received a year ago, that the country was safely defended by the existing Navy, and comparing that statement with this year's, I think there is cause for the gravest suspicion that, if we knew the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, instead of our being asked to vote an extra eleven millions, which it really comes to and which we shall willingly do, we should probably find it necessary to vote an even larger sum, perhaps 20 millions besides the ordinary average yearly expenditure, to meet the requirements of complete and, humanly speaking, adequate national defence.

*Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I can assure my hon. Friend that I and my colleagues do give the House the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and if my hon. Friend had reserved his charge as to this until we have the full discussion of the naval programme, I think he would have arrived at the conclusion that there is no discrepancy between what I propose now and the statement I made last year. An observation, which all who have ever been entrusted with naval administration will endorse, is, "do not attach too much importance to the outlay of individual years, but look rather to the results." It is not the expenditure on ships which are incomplete, or upon men not trained, which has an effect. When war breaks out, it is the number of ships that are complete, and the number of men ready for service, and if my hon. Friend will bear that little maxim in mind, I think he will find hereafter that there is no discrepancy between the statements I have made in the past, and those I hope the House will accept in the future. Now, there have been a number of questions put to me with reference to matter of detail. My hon. Friend the Member for Holderness made a very able speech on a highly technical point, and I have derived considerable information from the suggestions he has made. They shall have my very careful consideration. Almost every naval officer who has studied the subject of tactics attaches supreme importance to having an adequate and thoroughly efficient signalling staff, for in these days of rapid motion the great difficulty will be to obtain accurate information concerning the enemy, and to keep in touch with his movements. Therefore, anything that can improve our system of signalling and telegraphing is worthy of our closest attention. As to several other questions on smaller points, I am not prepared with the necessary information to enable me to answer them now. I may say, there is no doubt that a considerable proportion of what is called naval crime occurs among men between the ages of 18 and 23, and if we are able to substitute barracks for floating ships, I believe there will be a great improvement in discipline among these men. The main question, which has been raised to-night, has related to the status and pay of engineer officers. I quite agree with my noble Friend the Member for Marylebone in his estimate of the value of the services of these officers, and in his opinion as to the necessity of having a thoroughly efficient body of them, but my hon. Friends must recollect that I have to look at this question from two points of view. I am bound to see that the men are adequately remunerated; and I am equally bound to see if the Navy can be well supplied at existing rates, that an undue charge is not put on the taxpayer by more highly remunerating any one particular class of men. There is no question but that we can obtain any number of young engineer officers, and a remarkable feature about the supply is that a large, if not by far the larger, proportion of those who wish to enter the Service are sons of engineer officers, and that is sufficient, in my opinion, to justify our refusal to increase the pay. I have looked carefully into the matter of their emolument, and I must say it compares favourably with the case of those who occupy similar positions of responsibility in the Mercantile Marine; and while purely combative officers in the Royal Navy are not paid better than those in the Navies of France and Germany, the rate of pay of engineer officers is higher than that received by the engineer branches in these foreign Navies. With these facts before me, I feel justified in not assenting to this proposal for an increased rate of pay, and, in saying this, I am expressing the views of the Board of Admiralty. My hon. Friend who spoke last seemed to think that there were serious deficiencies in the *personnel* of the Navy. May I remind him of one fact, that at the time of the manœuvres every available

ship was engaged, and all the vessels in the Navy which were commissioned at the time had their full complement, or ought to have had their full complement of men as in time of war. Therefore, whatever deficiencies there were during the manœuvres, they represented deficiencies which would exist in time of war, and so far as our ships were concerned, those deficiencies were not at all serious except as regards the stokers. We were somewhat short of them, and not only that, but many of them were badly trained. This is a matter we are looking into. A large number of men were brought in of somewhat indifferent physique and with but little knowledge of the duties they were called upon to perform. They were put on board new ships with complicated machinery, and under very trying circumstances had to perform their duties for the first time. I have not the slightest doubt that to this fact may be attributed the circumstances that during the first few days of the manœuvres many of our ships failed to reach the estimated speed which was expected from them. I propose to take on a considerable additional number of stokers this year, and if every year we have manœuvres on a large scale, it is clear that each year a large proportion of these stokers will have the best of training, because training in sea-going vessels is incomparably superior to training on board vessels in harbour. I hope in this way gradually to surmount the difficulty, and I hope also to be able, in the course of the next year or two, to largely augment the number of stokers belonging to the Naval Reserve. They are a class different from the stokers of Mercantile Marine, but they have the best of training, and if we can by the payment of a small maintenance fee get several hundreds, or perhaps two or three thousand upon our lists, we shall then have a valuable reserve of men, a large proportion of whom we should always be able to lay our hands upon in the case of emergency. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Banffshire asked me two or three questions. The first was with regard to the proposed increase of 1,100 in the marine force, and as to what he thinks is an insufficient provision in the Estimates for them, but I may explain that all these men are not to be added at once, and this fact will account for the small amount of money asked for for their pay. I think I have now answered all the questions which have been put to me.

MR. DE LISLE: There is the pay of the engineer officers.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I think my right hon. Friend will admit that there are conclusive reasons against increasing the pay.

*LORD C. BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): I am sorry to obtrude myself upon the Committee again, but there are a great number of important questions connected with the officers and men of the Fleet, and this is the only opportunity I shall have of discussing them. If the claims of the officers and men are not discussed now they will be put off for another year. Therefore I hope I shall not be considered obstructive if I call attention to some important points somewhat in detail. I think it is very hard for hon. Gentlemen who have been sent here as supporters of Her Majesty's Government—and for my own part I do support Her Majesty's Government—to be told at the last moment "There is no time to consider these matters; we want the money." I say that that sort of thing cannot go on. I do not care which Government is in power [*Ministerial Cries of* "Oh!"] Well, I do care which Government is in power, but for the sake of my argument it is a matter of indifference. Unfortunately it is the usual practice to slur these questions over, and to keep out of sight everything connected with the Navy. The mind of the public has been tremendously exercised upon the question of guns, but the strength and safety of the Fleet and the training of the men composing it are now intangible matters, and are, therefore, likely to be overlooked, although far more important questions. In the same way, the Secretary of State for War brings forward the question of barracks. We can see them, and know that they are unhealthy, but we cannot see the strength of the Army. It is necessary that they should say something about these matters, and I always like to say, in this House, what I think—not that I mean to maintain that I am always right. In the first place, there is the case of the signalmen. What we want are the very best signalmen, and the best arrangement for signalling we can

possibly get. All nations, I am glad to say, are badly off in this respect, but other nations pay more attention to signalling than we do, devote a good deal more time to experiments and practice in signalling than this country. Signalmen form the line of communication, and upon the way in which they discharge their work the fate of a naval engagement may often depend. When I was at the Admiralty, the Board objected to everything. One member of the old Board is there yet, and I have no doubt that he still continues to object. The question of signalling is one which ought to be put to the fleet at sea, so that you should get their ideas. A signalman ought to be attached to every coastguard station, and he ought to be taught telegraphy, and placed, by means of the telegraph, in contact with the head of the Intelligence Department in Whitehall. More attention should be paid to the training of these signalmen, and they ought to be better paid and granted better rank.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: That has been done.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: My noble Friend says that has been done. What I want is, that men at sea should be instructed to send home their ideas. Prevention is better than cure, and you ought to have signalmen who will know exactly what to do whatever may occur. Then, again, there is the case of the stokers. I am sorry that I am compelled to bring these questions forward, and I can assure the Committee it is not with any desire of being obstructive. The whole of the engine-room department, in my opinion, wants reforming altogether. My noble Friend says, "You can get plenty of men; why, then, should you give more wages?" No doubt that is a fair argument; but what did the doctors do? They closed the whole of their schools against the Navy, and the result was that the Medical Service of the Navy was smashed up by the ring thus created. My noble Friend now proposes to do with the engineers what he did with the lieutenants. He says there is no necessity for paying these men according to the value of their work, because you can get plenty of them. I do not think that is a good argument. What is wanted is fair play, and the engineers should be put in position whether the supply is plentiful or not. I am sorry to think that the Government should unnecessarily invite the formation of a ring or a combination of discontented men in the Service. The stokers in the Navy have not been adequately trained. That was made manifest in the recent manœuvres, and my noble Friend has confessed that last year the Fleet could not do what it was expected to do, because stokers were not ready. It is necessary in this country that we should be ready for any emergency at a moment's notice. We may lose our Empire unless every little detail is attended so. Instead of the stokers being trained in other and less important matters, they ought in time of peace to be thoroughly taught to do what would be their work in time of war. The whole system of training both bluejackets and stokers requires to be entirely altered. While at the Admiralty I was continually pointing out the extravagance and inutility of training men in a time of peace to do what they would not be required to do in a time of war. The men you get are no fools. You have only to teach them what they have to do, and they will do their level best to do it. I do not know how my noble Friend will get over that argument. Then there is the question of the Marines. My noble Friend says that he is going to increase the strength of the Marines. I am glad to hear it. Our coaling stations ought to be under the Admiralty and garrisoned by Marines. This would be done more efficiently than by ordinary soldiers, and Marines being long-service men, it would also be more economical, saving the expense of chartering ships for the purpose of bringing home detachments of ordinary Line regiments. I should like to see a Committee appointed to inquire into this subject of the garrisons. I am afraid you would soon find out that things are not as you think they are. The hon. and gallant Member for the Holderness Division (Commander Bethell) has spoken of the trouble into which the seamen get who were between boyhood and manhood. I think he was a little too hard upon them.

COMMANDER BETHELL: I did not blame them.

*LORD C. BERESFORD: There was a time in my life when I was fond of a row. I would not give a fig for a

man who has not the pluck to get into a row. The boys who had the pluck to be always in a pickle were the best in the school. I sincerely hope that the House will not regard the bluejacket as a bad character. If I was asked to pick out a gentleman I should select a bluejacket. He is one of the best men I can imagine. He may not wear fine clothes, but he has all the qualities that make a gentleman, and I am sure the First Lord will support me in saying that the *personnel* of the British Navy is better now than it has ever been in its history. No doubt there are bad characters on board ship as well as good, and the greatest trouble we have on the lower deck is in dealing with these bad characters. When we can get the services of bluejackets at an early age, and insure them a pension of £30 or more when they retire at the age of 48, we are able to secure the very best men in the country; and I do not see why we should burden such men in their messes with bad characters. Send all the bad characters out of the Service; or do as the German Army does. The Germans have a really splendid Army; but in Germany a man who has been in prison is not allowed to join the Army, but in case of war he is compelled to cart food about, and to do the dirty work of the Army. When I was in command of the *Thunderer* there were 18 habitual "break-leaves," who were nothing but a burden to their messmates, and were perpetually grumbling. I called them up and addressed them. They were treated kindly but firmly; and in the course of eight months there were only seven left out of the 18. That shows that the men will always support you if you show that you have their interest at heart. As to the seven men, I am bound to say that they were a curse to the ship; and no kindness or civility would do them any good. The best thing is to turn such men out of the Navy altogether. If my noble Friend will get rid of the bad men in the Navy, he will do a great deal to aid the officers in their work, and at the same time confer an enormous benefit on the men. I hope my noble Friend will be able to show that he is prepared to add to the Fleet the necessary number of officers, for, at the present time, there is a deficiency of something like 300 lieutenants. The present system of educating officers is very faulty. Both the German and the French systems are better than our own. In these days of steam and exact accuracy of the gun the first aim is to knock off the head of the captain you are fighting. [*A Laugh.*] That may sound somewhat laughable; but what will win an action is first, speed, then the helm, and third the head of the enemy's captain. The head of the enemy's captain is the most important; and in all foreign Navies that is recognized. It certainly ought to be the object. Consequently it is important that young officers should be thoroughly trained so that, if such a thing happens, they may be prepared at a moment's notice to take command of the ship. That ought to be one of the principal points in the education of a naval officer. I hope the noble Lord will think of the matters I have mentioned. I am certain they will have to be done eventually, and why should they not be done now, when the noble Lord is proposing this most necessary addition to the Fleet, of which I hope the House of Commons will approve?

*ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I only propose to trespass upon the attention of the Committee for a very few moments, and I regret that I was unable to offer a few observations before the First Lord replied to the first speakers. I should like, in the first place, to refer to the question of the pay of the engineers which has been alluded to. I think there is great inconvenience in bringing forward questions affecting the pay of individual classes in the Service. I do not regard it as part of my duty in this House to advocate increase of pay for any class. That responsibility belongs to the Admiralty. All that I can hope to do is to draw attention to the subject, and ask the Admiralty to consider it, and take the advice of some Departmental or outside Committee upon it. I regret that the hon. Member for Faversham (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen) drew a comparison between the case of the doctors and that of the engineers. My own object in rising is to draw attention to another class—the lieutenants. I feel strongly that their case is a very hard one. Their claim has been met with one hand, but taken away with the other.

The pay of the lieutenants has been increased, for lieutenants of eight and 12 years' standing on condition, that the first named should have had three years' service in a ship of war at sea, and the latter six years. The Admiralty do not appear to have taken into account that it is hardly fair to double the sea service for four years' seniority only. If three years are sufficient for lieutenants of eight years' service, six years must be wrong for 12 years' service. Four or four and a-half years ought to be quite sufficient. I hope that the Admiralty will take the matter into consideration, and any relaxation of the conditions would be regarded by the older officers as a great boon. I really think it is worth while to make some attempt to satisfy this most deserving class of officers who are serving now as lieutenants, and in all probability will obtain no higher rank. There is another question which earnestly demands attention. Lieutenants are deeply distressed at the way in which they are treated in respect of leave. Many of them complain of the gross breach of faith committed towards them by those in authority. When a lieutenant comes home he is entitled, in the ordinary course of things, to six weeks' leave; but frequently, owing to the dearth of lieutenants, he is ordered off again in a fortnight. Leave is looked upon by lieutenants as of the greatest importance, even of as much importance as pay and rank. Certainly, if men are deprived of leave, as lieutenants are, they ought to be given consideration in the form of pay. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Holderness Division (Commander Bethell) has spoken of the rating of leading seamen. I look upon leading seamen, especially for small vessels, as most valuable men, and I do not agree with his proposal to abolish the rating. As to the question of signalling, I heartily concur in the remarks made by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone. I believe that the question of connecting all the coastguard stations of the country with the Admiralty is now ripe for settlement. I trust that some effort will be made to bring about the connection. My attention has been called elsewhere to the importance of raising the status of engine-room artificers when in charge of torpedo or gun boats. I think there is something in their contention that when they are in charge of vessels, and absolutely doing the duty of engineers, warrant rank should be conceded to them. As to stokers, I think that it is extremely desirable that their training should be improved. You have already a school at hand. Why not double the number of stokers on the Indian troopers? That would be about the very best training ground you could possibly have. Then, again, I share my noble Friend's view as to the garrisoning of certain coaling stations with Marines. I advocated this in the House last year, and I still think that there would be a great advantage in having Marines there under the orders of the Admiral in charge of the station. My noble Friend referred to the education of naval officers, and advocated a change in that education. I am fully in accord with my noble Friend when he says that the education of naval officers is a most important matter, but I cannot agree with him as to the advisability of changing it.

*Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: The Committee recommended it.

*Admiral FIELD: If my noble Friend is in accord with the recommendation of the Committee, then I withdraw my remarks. I will not trespass further upon the attention of the Committee, but will only, in conclusion, again draw the attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty to the grievances, especially, of the lieutenants of the Navy.

Captain PRICE (Devonport): Mr. Chairman, I desire to make a few observations as to the steam branch of the Navy, and am glad that the subject has been raised already by a civilian, inasmuch as we who are connected with Dockyard constituencies are often accused of partiality when we deal with these topics. My hon. and gallant Friend (Admiral Field) has taken the highly Constitutional view that the grievances of naval men ought to be examined by Departmental Committees. That is perfectly true, and that is exactly what has been done; but, unfortunately, the recommendations of Committees are not acted upon by the Admiralty. An hon. and gallant Friend who sits opposite asked a question the other day, and the answer he got was that various Committees had been ap-

pointed to report as to the steam branch of the Navy, and that effect has been given to their recommendations. I traverse that statement entirely. I complain that the recommendations of these Committees have not been given effect to in many ways which I might mention. Now, I have known the engineer branch of the Service since 1855. I have seen its growth and development, and I have no hesitation in saying that its duties and responsibilities have increased enormously. Undoubtedly there have been improvements made in the position of the men; but neither the pay nor the position is by any means proportionate to the increase and development of the duties and responsibilities of this branch of the Navy. The engineers are greatly aggrieved that the recommendations of the various Committees have not been carried out in respect to their rank. Then there is the question of messing. The late Mr. Ward Hunt, when First Lord of the Admiralty, took the matter into consideration, and promised great improvement. Certainly great improvement has been effected, but as yet the engineers are not allowed the right of messing with the other officers of a ship at the Naval College at Greenwich. This is felt to be a great hardship. Allusion has been made to the rating of the engine-room artificers. The word "rating" conveys very little idea to the House of what is meant by it. Artificers are really not so much assistants to the engineer officers, but to a great extent substitutes for them. Some years ago we very largely reduced the number of engineer officers and introduced the rating of engine-room artificers, who do actually the very duties performed by engineer officers. For that reason artificers are in a position of great responsibility. My hon. and gallant Friend (Admiral Field) thinks that in some cases they might be rated as warrant officers. I go farther than he has gone, and think that after a certain term of service the rating of warrant officers ought to be granted to all these men. Now, with regard to stokers. It has been said that we are very short indeed of stokers, a most important branch of the Service. I think there is one way in which the number of stokers might be increased, and increased at very little expense to the Service. It has been remarked that there is a great difficulty found in forming a reserve of stokers; but I do not know the reason for it at all. Some years ago I had the temerity to suggest in the House a way of strengthening the Navy generally. I think, if it could be done, an interchangeability so to speak, between the Navy and the merchant service ought to be encouraged. The way in which we do that at present is to form a reserve consisting of men in the merchant service, who, when called for, are obliged to come for service in the Navy. The suggestion I made some time ago was that a certain number of bluejackets in the Navy should be allowed to go on leave into the merchant service, receiving, of course, their pay from that service. I do not wish to go into that matter now, because there are certain objections raised to it, but I do not think the same objections could be raised in the case of stokers. The stokers would be paid by the merchant service, and the only expense borne by the Naval Vote would be the prospective portion of pension, because it is necessary that the time the men spent in the merchant service should count in the fixing of the men's pensions. The result would be that we would have at least 500 men in the merchant service always available to be called upon in time of need. There is another matter connected with the discipline of the service which I desire to mention. It is a small matter, but nevertheless a sore one—namely, the question of saluting warrant officers. There are certain men in the Service who cannot attain to the rank of warrant officers—men in the position of ships' stewards and others—and it is considered rather hard that these men should be obliged to salute warrant officers when they meet them on shore. Practically warrant officers spring from the same rank in society as ships' stewards, and it is not the latter's fault that they cannot attain to the rank of warrant officers.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I should like to say I hope the Admiralty will press the Treasury to give them what is really necessary to establish a proper system of barrack accommodation for the Royal Navy. The very defect pointed out by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for

the Holderness Division (Commander Bethell) with regard to petty officers is due, I think, to the fact that, as the Navy is at present situated and organized, the chain of discipline cannot be maintained as efficiently and as well as it is in the Army, owing to the want of proper barrack accommodation in which to train young men and petty officers. There is another matter to which I should like to draw the attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty—that is the great cost of the *personnel* of the Navy. I need give, I think, only one illustration. We are about to sanction the employment of 308 commissioned officers of the accountant branch—men whose simple duty it is to keep the books of the ships in commission. To these 308 men the country pays as much as £87,000 a-year. Now, that is due to the fact that the Navy has never been organized upon the basis of a continuous service system. We are struggling on with a system adapted to an exploded state of things. To emphasize the fact of the costliness of this accountant branch of the Service, let me point out that these 308 accountant officers cost £3,000 a-year more than the whole twelve companies corps of Royal Marine Artillery, numbering 2,500 officers and men. I entirely and most cordially support the views that have been expressed with regard to the garrisoning of the coaling stations. I am sure that anyone who has studied the whole question of the work to be done in time of war must come to the conclusion that the whole of the forces at a distant naval station should be under the command of the Admiral of that station. By such a plan we should save a considerable amount of money in the matter of Transport and Staff. We would get real efficiency and economy, and we would not have dual control on our foreign naval stations. I also desire to say it is not right in these days to misapply, or rather not to employ, the Marine Artillery Force created at the cost of the country. I can speak from experience and personal knowledge, and am quite certain of this—that no other country in the world would tolerate that you should, at the cost of the country, educate, train, and turn out a Marine Artillery Force which you do not know what to do with when you have got it. We have Artillery officers who cost this country large sums of money to train, not one of whom is employed in artillery work, while at present we have to break up the Horse Artillery to find artillerymen for our coaling stations. I am persuaded that the more this matter is looked into the more it will appear that the organization of the Navy needs amendment, and adapting to the requirements of modern times.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD, Lancashire, Ormskirk): The discussion has ranged over a very large number of topics, mainly of a very technical character, into which I will not attempt to enter. It might be supposed, from certain observations made in debate, that the Board of Admiralty is a body of laymen who have not the advantage of the advice of some of the most eminent naval officers as to the discipline and the general arrangements of the Service. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord C. Beresford) has again brought up the question of signalling, and has led the Committee to suppose that the Admiralty has not paid the necessary attention to that important work of the Service. But when I remind the noble Lord that seamen of the large sea-going experience of Admiral Bosanquet, Captain Clark, Captain Durrant, and Admiral Dowell, have been the advisers of the Board in this matter, and that the recommendations of the Rating Committee have also been concurred in by the Committee on Signalling, I think the noble Lord will admit that those gallant officers are qualfied to give such advice as my noble Friend the First Lord can follow. With regard, again, to the stokers, great attention has been paid in the past year or two to the object of obtaining in times of emergency the best-trained stokers in the world. The stokers in the merchant steamers are constantly at work; they have to keep their boilers at high pressure for the long voyages to the East and to America, and they are really the best men we can have as reserve stokers. Relaxations have been made in the regulations affecting the joining of reserve stokers which we hope will lead to a large accession of numbers. The question raised in regard to the engineers and their rank has been fully dealt with by my noble Friend the First Lord; but I wish just to say this—that in regard to the pay which engineers

and others in the Service should receive, we must have some regard to the rates at which men in similar positions are paid in other employ—say, in the Mercantile Service. The highest pay in mercantile vessels for engineers and in ships that are continually crossing the Atlantic is £300 a-year, while engineers in the Royal Navy can rise in pay—including emoluments—to £600; so I think it must be said that the engineers in the Navy are reasonably and fairly dealt with. As regards rank there is a difficulty. At present engineers rank with, but after, lieutenants. If they were accorded equal rank absolutely with lieutenants a difficulty might arise which naval men will appreciate. It might so happen that a lieutenant might be called upon, through the death of a superior officer, to take command of a ship, yet if the suggestion of putting engineers upon an equality with lieutenants were followed out, we might find that the engineer, was the senior officer of the ship. That might be the ridiculous position in which the ship would be placed if the question of relative rank were pushed to its extreme limit as suggested. We are perfectly alive to the necessity of increasing the number of officers, and if my noble Friend will refer to the Estimates he will find that subordinate officers have been increased in number by 141, namely, 65 midshipmen, 18 clerks, and 58 Naval cadets. This increase will go in the subordinate ranks until they are sufficient. Then my hon. and gallant Friend (Admiral Field) has referred to the question of lieutenants. It will be observed that for the past 12 months the position and pay of lieutenants have been improved at the cost of something like £18,300 a year to the nation, and that I think is fair testimony to the consideration shown by the Board to lieutenants in the Service. I do not know that there are any other matters to deal with. I may just mention that communication between coast-guard stations has been carried out to a considerable extent, and that considerable sums of money have been taken for putting up the necessary semaphores.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): The noble Lord opposite (Lord Charles Beresford), to whom we all listen with so much interest on naval affairs, resigned his position in the Admiralty because in his opinion sufficient attention was not paid to the Intelligence Department of the Navy, and I wish to call attention to a point which illustrates the position he took. In other countries, I understand, and especially in Germany, there is to be found at the Admiralty, as at the War Office, an elaborate Intelligence Department, and in this Intelligence Department there are plans of campaign adapted to every variety of circumstances, and the consequence is, that if war breaks out, say between Germany and another Power, every captain of a German war ship sails with sealed orders giving him directions what to do under these or those circumstances, and it is possible for those at the head of affairs by simply telegraphing a single cipher word to all their stations to direct what steps should be taken, where vessels should rendezvous, and what they are to do. Nothing of the kind exists at our Admiralty. We are absolutely without any plans of campaign, and if war were to suddenly break out, we should find our Fleet scattered over the face of the globe, and probably be unable to utilize it before the war would be over. This is what the noble Lord complained of. A question which I put the other day will illustrate the great importance of this to the honour and interest of the country, and it arises out of occurrences in Samoa. I called attention the other day by question to an account given by Mr. Stevenson, the well-known writer of events in that Island. I asked, among other things, if it was true that a British subject—an artist—had been forcibly seized on board a British vessel by German authorities, and taken on board a German war steamer, and had only been released after the commander of a British man-of-war in the neighbourhood had emphasized his demand by clearing his decks for action. I was told by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs that it was quite true that a British subject had been so seized, but the right hon. Gentleman said he did not know whether if was a fact that the British commander had cleared his decks for action. Since I received that answer, I have been supplied with some further information, from which it appears that H.M.S. *Lizard* was at Samoa, and the captain in consequence

of the adoption of certain high-handed proceedings by German authorities there, invited British residents to hoist the British flag as a protection for their property, but it appears that afterwards another British ship—the *Royalist* I think—arrived, and her captain refused to endorse the instructions of the captain of the *Lizard*, thereby showing that the two captains had no instructions how to act in such cases. But the other matter to which I have alluded is of still greater importance. If a British man-of-war clears her decks for action preparatory to engaging with a German man-of-war, under circumstances in which, I must say, I think her captain was right, I should imagine that is a matter of sufficient gravity to demand an immediate report to the Government of this country; and I think the representatives of the Government here, in the face of such a grave event, should be prepared to give us some information on the subject. But we have nothing of the sort. I have drawn attention to this lack of information in relation to other matters. We have had bombardments of native settlements all round the Pacific. Now and again we see in the Press a report that H.M.S. so-and-so has bombarded such and such an island, and whenever I have seen such accounts I have asked for Papers giving information on the subject, and I must say the noble Lord has admitted the reasonableness of the request, has consented without cavil, and sooner or later we have had the Papers, but not until long after the event has been chronicled in the newspapers. Now I do not wish to underrate the responsibilities of captains on far away stations. I know it is necessary to allow much freedom of action to them, but surely in regard to an occurrence which, if the account is correct, approached very near the verge of an act of war, the Commander should forthwith report all the circumstances to the Government, so that at the first available opportunity the Government might communicate its views on the subject. Now in regard to this seizure of a British subject at Samoa, it appears to me to be a matter of great international importance of which notice should be taken, and taken emphatically, in this House. It appears that this British subject—an artist—happened to have been sketching (among other places) in the camp of the chief whom the Germans are pleased to call the "rebel" chief, and he had gone on board the British ship *Richmond*. He was accused by the German authorities of being a spy. Well, it appears to me that according to International law, even if he had been a spy, he having got out of the territory where the Germans were carrying on warlike operations, and being within British jurisdiction on board a British ship, which is equivalent to British territory, the German authorities had no earthly right to drag him from the ship *Richmond*.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not see how the discussion of the action of the German authorities is relevant to the Vote.

DR. CAMERON: I do not propose to discuss the consent of the German authorities. What I did mean to discuss is the manner in which the Admiralty, or the Government, as we were told the day before yesterday, had received no information whatever regarding an action of one of their naval commanders under circumstances of the utmost gravity—which might have involved a question of peace or war between this country and a friendly Power. So far from saying anything invidious against the German Government, I am a great admirer of Germany.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! This is not relevant to the Vote. The hon. Member is in order in discussing the conduct of an officer whose pay is concerned in this Vote, but he should not go outside that question.

DR. CAMERON: I at once submit to your ruling, Sir. What I would comment on is this—the want of definite instructions, which, as I have said, exist in other countries as to how naval officers should act under certain contingencies, and the want of any arrangements which should compel an officer engaged in naval command at a distant station at once to communicate with the Admiralty in case a belligerent action should be imposed upon him. In connection with the Pacific Islands, there have been numerous instances illustrating what I mean, and when we have founded a question on information derived from the Press, invariably we have found that the noble Lord knew nothing about the matter, or he could not give the information off-hand. In many cases what have proved to be very high-handed actions have been performed in

attacking these Islands, and what I complain of is that the Admiralty does not command all its naval officers on foreign stations at once to communicate any serious action on their part in order that they may receive instructions how to act. I am certain if that were done aborigines in different parts of the world would be spared a considerable amount of bombardment, and officers would think twice before they undertook actions which undoubtedly in some few instances have been conducted with considerable disregard to what calmer people would consider international rights. I have referred to Samoa because it illustrates the danger that exists not merely to poor islanders who never do us any harm, but to our relations with a great and powerful nation with whom we are on friendly terms, in not having an immediate Report submitted in order that the Government may take action. I think it is a matter which concerns the honour of this country that any Report of this sort should be at once made known to the nation. I believe it would greatly tend to lessen the danger of complications with any friendly Power if it were known that this House is jealous of the rights of British subjects abroad and determined that no insult should be offered without calling it in question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

*MR. W. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell): I would just like to say a word or two with reference to Samoa and to the Pacific generally, and first I would point out to the Committee that getting information regarding events that take place in the Pacific—events which may at any time bring us in conflict with Germany and some other Power—does not depend altogether upon Consular information to the Foreign Office, because in most of the small islands which are sought to be grabbed, if I may use the expression, by various European Powers, there are no English Consuls, and the only information we can receive comes through the commanders of men-of-war, who call at these various small ports. At the end of last Session the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) gave me a very courteous answer with reference to a man-of-war being sent to Samoa, and he said the *Royalist* would proceed there for the protection of British subjects. That is all very well, and I do not wish now to enter upon any discussion as to how the commander of the *Royalist* discharged his duties; but I am entitled to think, and I believe also that the Australian Colonies will think, that there is a very singular want of information received by the Government as to the state of affairs at Samoa and other places in the Pacific, and as to the means by which, as it appears to me, English influence has been suffered to relax and to be degraded. I may point out that this is a matter upon which Australians naturally feel extremely jealous. It is English influence in the Pacific, after all, that is responsible for any civilization that is there. All civilization there has been due to Englishmen, to English ships, and to English missionaries, and not a single Power besides has done anything in that direction. I think, therefore, that the people of Australia have a right to complain of this want of information, and also that there do not appear to be sufficient instructions given as to what is to be done in case of certain eventualities in the Pacific. I would venture to say there is hardly a commander of a man-of-war on the station who has distinct instructions what he should do. In my short experience, and since I have interested myself in the affairs of the Pacific, I have known a number of instances where conflicts have arisen, and where there was no Report sent to England except by the commander of an English man-of-war, and I may say that I have never known an instance where the commander had a single definite instruction, or the faintest notion what he ought to do under a given state of circumstances. The result has generally been that the commander has done nothing, fearing to do something which would be contrary to the policy of the Government and so get rapped over the knuckles. I do not say he is to blame; probably I should act the same way myself under similar circumstances. However, English subjects have been left very much to their own devices, without any protection at all from their Government. I most strongly second the appeal of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), that in all cases the

Admiralty should instruct their commanders to make a definite and immediate Report upon circumstances which come under their notice, and seem to tend against British interests. It could hardly do much to embarrass the Government, and it might be of enormous importance to all our commerce there, not only with Australia, but the whole Pacific, and British subjects should be able to feel themselves in the position of being sure of the protection of those from whom they might naturally claim it. I am quite sure that the noble Lord himself is most desirous that British interests should be protected.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): After your ruling, Sir, to the effect that it is competent for any hon. Member to bring on any question affecting the conduct of any officer whose pay comes out of this Vote, I would ask whether I am entitled to bring on a subject, of which I have given notice in a Motion, but which I was not able to move? It affects the conduct of several officers employed in the Naval Manœuvres last year, and whose pay comes within the Vote now before the House. What I desire to bring under notice is the conduct of officers who went about executing pretended raids upon unprotected towns, and levying pretended requisitions upon the inhabitants of those towns.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that question is relevant to the Vote; it appears to me to be a question of policy, and the right hon. Gentleman's remarks should be directed to the Admiralty Vote.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Then I will take the opportunity to bring the question forward upon the Admiralty Vote, No. 13.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I will only detain the House a few minutes with the Motion of which I have given notice. A Conservative paper, a few days ago, challenged any Radical Member of Parliament to point out how a single sixpence might be saved in the Estimates for the Services. I am not unwilling to take up that challenge. I hold in my hand the Naval List for the current month. There I find the Royal yacht *Osborne*, 1,850 tons, has the following complement of superior officers—namely, a commander, 2 lieutenants, a staff commander, a staff surgeon, a staff engineer, and an assistant paymaster in charge. I find also that the *Victoria and Albert*, another Royal yacht, 2,470 tons, has the following complement of superior officers—viz., a captain, a commander, two lieutenants, a staff commander, a fleet surgeon, a fleet paymaster, a fleet engineer, an assistant paymaster, and an assistant engineer. This yacht has also two tenders, the *Alberta* and the *Elfin*. The *Alberta* has, I find, for superior officers, a staff captain and a fleet engineer, and the other tender, the *Elfin*, has a staff commander and an engineer. In other words, these yachts have as large a complement of officers as a battle-ship of the first line. What the actual cost may be at the present time, of course, it is very difficult, if not impossible, precisely to ascertain; but I have referred to the last Return we have on the subject, presented in 1883, and I find there that the total annual cost of pay, allowance, and victualling for officers and crew of this fleet of Royal yachts was £34,480. Now, I think I should be perfectly justified if I moved to reduce the total cost by one-half; but I am anxious not to leave to hon. Members opposite any reasonable excuse for declining to vote with me. I have, therefore, selected two items, two especial and specific items, relating to these yachts, amounting together to £80—the allowances to the navigating lieutenant of the *Osborne*, and the staff commander of the *Victoria and Albert* for a charge for state furniture. Now, I submit this is absolutely indefensible in the first place, for it is ridiculous that a charge for state furniture should be put down especially for the Naval Service; and if it were necessary to establish an expenditure of this kind, it is clear that the navigating lieutenant and commander are not the proper persons to be trusted with it. When a proposition of this kind is brought forward, vested interests are generally urged against it. In this case, however, no vested interest can possibly arise; you cannot have a vested interest in a mere allowance. Of course, when the service is discontinued, the allowance ceases, and with it all claims for compensation. For these reasons I beg to

move the Motion which stands in my name on the paper.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,201,620, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

*LORD G. HAMILTON: All the officers serving in Her Majesty's ships who are in charge of valuable stores receive additional remuneration and are liable for any deficiencies. The emoluments attached to those particular duties are—in the *Victoria and Albert* £25, and in the *Osborne* £30. These payments are made in accordance with the general practice in the service.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Does the noble Lord consider "state furniture" naval stores?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: Yes, certainly; and far more valuable than most stores.

DR. CAMERON: Will the noble Lord reply to the points I raised a few moments ago?

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Before this subject is disposed of, there is another matter I should like to mention as requiring consideration. It is in connection with the appointment of a certain foreign nobleman to a certain post in the Navy. Of course, having been recently imprisoned—["Hear, hear!"]—yes; it is a circumstance of which I am proud—I do not know whether this foreign nobleman still holds his appointment in Her Majesty's Navy, but I presume he does. I should like to know how it comes to pass that, with such a patriotic Government in existence, we have these foreign noblemen placed in these positions——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member evidently does not appreciate the fact that there is a specific Amendment before the Committee which must be dealt with.

DR. TANNER: I understood that the Amendment had reference to the Royal yachts generally, and not merely to the furniture in them. If, however, the Amendment deals only with furniture, I would point out that the furniture of Prince Leiningen—who is neither ornamental or useful——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

DR. TANNER: If I am not in order in going into this now, Sir, I will raise the point at a future stage.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 66 Noes 160.—(Div. List, No. 20.)

Original Question again proposed.

DR. CAMERON: I would ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he can now say whether any progress has been made with the construction of an effective Intelligence Department in connection with the Admiralty? The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone has rendered immense service to the country by pressing upon the Government the formation of such a Department, and I had hoped that the noble Lord's resignation would have secured the serious attention of the Government to the matter. I would ask the noble Lord to reply on that point, and also to tell us whether any information has been received from the Commander in Samoa as to the action he took against the German war-ships in connection with the forcible abduction of a British subject from a British vessel?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The Naval Intelligence Department is in a most efficient working condition. Every single officer in the Service has definite instructions what to do in these cases. The reason why the Government has not received such late intelligence from Samoa as has been received by private agencies is because the captain of the man-of-war there observed the well-known and universal rule of communicating all particulars to his Commander-in-Chief.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): We really must take these two Votes together—the Army as well as the Navy. We find that there is to be an increase in the number of men for the Army, and the First Lord of the Admiralty told us the other day that when the new ships are built we shall have an increase of 3,000 men in the Navy. Now, I do object to all these extensions of our armaments. Everybody who raises such objections, I know perfectly well, is told that he is unpatriotic; but I do not favour the patriotism which is considered to be proved by the reckless voting of any proposal for increased expenditure. I am determined, always and invariably, to divide the House

whenever I see these 30 millions sterling per annum, which we expend on the two Services, exceeded. Although I desire to see the country in possession of a strong and efficient Navy, I think 30 millions a-year is quite enough to spend on this species of insurance. If, at any time, you want more, take it from the amount spent on the Army, which, I think, will easily bear reduction. I think the country is determined that there shall be reasonable economy in our defences, and that these perpetual increases shall not continue. In 1848 the amount spent on the Army and Navy was only 18 millions. Have we been invaded since then—have we been conquered since that time? Not at all. We have been attacking other people, but have remained secure ourselves. I always distrust those gentlemen who "ask for more" in connection with the Army and Navy. When I heard the big Jingo drum being beat before Parliament met I knew what the game was. I knew we should have demands for more money, more men, more marines, more stokers. Things are not going well with the Government at home, and they want to draw a red herring across the trail. I am opposed to the whole thing, and I move that the Vote be reduced by £89,500, being the cost of wages, &c., for the extra 3,000 men.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,112,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I rise cordially to support the Amendment, of the hon. Member for Northampton, and do so on the ground that no reason whatever has been given for any increase of expenditure such as should justify a man of common sense increasing his household expenses. There ought to be some reason given. We have increased the expenses of the Navy enormously, and that in a year which we have been assured by Her Majesty in the Speech from the Throne is one of profound peace. Unless some cause is shown—some threatened danger to the country—I do contend that we ought not to allow a single shilling of increased expenditure to be paid for increased armaments. Hon. Members do not, I think, appreciate the enormous waste which goes on in matters of this kind. Were it not for the terrible drain on our industries necessitated by the immense expenditure upon our Army and Navy, I am pursuaded that the workers in the country would be far better off than they are. Our imports and exports are continually increasing; capitalists are making money still—perhaps not so fast as they desire, for they never do that—but still they are making money, whilst complaints are heard on every hand on the part of the industrial population. No one would grudge spending money on the Army and Navy if there were a common-sense probability of danger to the country; but what the working classes complain of is that money should be extracted from them on dreamy grounds of remote and improbable, and almost impossible, contingencies, which no man in his senses expects to happen. On these grounds I cordially support the Motion for the reduction of the Vote.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): I have much pleasure in supporting the reduction, because I do not want to see any of that insane rivalry in fleets of which we see so much in regard to armies on the Continent. The expenditure on the Army and Navy in all countries is becoming heavier and heavier, because every one is trying to have more powerful forces than his neighbour. If we now increase our Navy, there will be some Jingo or other in France who will want to increase the French Navy; and when an increase is effected in the French Navy, there will be a demand made by the Jingoes in this country for a further increase of our Navy, and so on. As H.M.S. *Sultan* has gone to the bottom the Government will have the Navy strengthened by her full complement of men, so that the number of men and marines now asked for will not be required.

Mr. COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): We have heard a great many conflicting opinions on this subject, but one thing is clear—namely, that all gentlemen connected with the naval services want to get hold of more money. Though they cannot agree as to how it is to be expended, they all agree in this, that they must have more from the National purse. We are wasting to a large extent the National resources. Depend

upon it that sooner or later these extravagant expenditure will come home to us. The poverty of this country—notwithstanding its wealth on the one hand—is increasing. [*Laughter.*] Yes; I say that the wealth is increasing amongst certain men, but poverty is increasing in larger numbers. [*Renewed laughter.*] I am speaking of what I know. The poverty of the country is becoming a sad scene of trouble to us, and a sad scene of danger to us, and I am sure that unless we look at the question carefully, before long it will become a matter of great danger to us. I hear our right hon. Gentleman very much exercised as to an increase of the Navy. Another is exercised as to the expenditure on the Navy; but there is far more danger from this increase of armaments than from anything else. The rivalry is continually going on, and the result is, we are bringing the whole of Europe into such a condition that there is danger for us all. If we increase our Navy on the one hand, another Power increases its Navy, so that the relative position is unchanged. I do ask the House to put a stop to this rivalry that is going on. I support with all my heart and might the Amendment of my hon. Friend, and I hope he will press it to a division. [*Laughter.*] Those who laugh to-day will have to appear before their constituents, and when they do—and my impression is that it will be much sooner than many of them expect—this effort to increase the national expenditure will be one of the things they will have to face. I believe the time is not far distant when the rule that is applied to those who are on the business of the House will also be applied to Members of this House who receive pay in the Services to which they vote money. There are so many Members of this House interested in this expenditure that when persons like myself, representing those on whom taxation bears heavily, try to call attention to it, they are laughed at by the very men who receive pay in the Military and Naval Services.

DR. TANNER (Mid. Cork), who rose amidst laughter from below the Ministerial Gangway: I like to treat that laughter with the contempt it deserves. Excuse me if I refer to the more important point which has been brought forward by the hon. Gentleman who sits on this Front Bench beneath me. I think that there are many questions connected with the Navy, and with the men who are employed in the Navy, that deserve some consideration from Members of this House. There is one point that I should like to get a specific answer upon from the First Lord of the Admiralty. I should like to know how it comes to pass that Catholics—and I speak as an Irish Protestant—are boycotted when they endeavour to enter the Navy. I should like hon. Members to look into this question, and ascertain how it comes to pass that in the South of Ireland, where we possess a body of fishermen, of men who are trained to the sea and to seafaring work, when these men come forward and try to get into the Royal Navy their services are rejected. I can tell the First Lord of the Admiralty that I have received information, not from any gentleman who sits on this side of the House, but from officers of the Royal Navy who belong to the same Party as the noble Lord, which is of a character such as to justify me in asking him to look into this matter. Let him see how many Irishmen or Irish fishermen ——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member's observations are not relevant to the proposed reduction of the Vote.

DR. TANNER: I thought, Sir, that this Vote was attacked by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton, who moved a reduction of the Vote in consequence of there being already sufficient men in the Navy, and I wanted, if I might be permitted, to point out how it was that really we want a recruiting ground to make the Navy efficient and effective, if we want to continue true union——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must again point out that the hon. Member's remarks are not relevant.

DR. TANNER: Mr. Courtney, I always accept your ruling, and, Sir, as long as I remain in this House I shall always do the same. Well, Sir, that point may not be pressed, but I shall take an opportunity of bringing it to the attention of the noble Lord. Of course, we can easily understand why

Her Majesty's Government at a time like the present, when they have got their coercion and intimidation in force in England as well as in Ireland, come forward and try to promote, not the welfare of the men of the Royal Navy, not of the able seamen or the privates—no, no, Sir, it is not for that reason that money is to be spent—but in order to swell the salaries of the younger sons of aristocratic houses. Everybody knows that the major portion of the officers of the Royal Navy is composed of these sons of aristocratic houses—aristocratic to a degree. I sincerely hope this money will not be voted, and I trust hon. Members will inquire into the facts and endeavour by every means in their power to prevent money being spent in order to swell the purses of an impoverished aristocracy and a discredited Pigottist faction.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 73; Noes 186.—(Div. List, No. 21).

Original Question again proposed.

DR. CAMERON: There is a rather important question arising on this Vote in connection with Scotland, and that is the frequent employment of Naval Forces and Marines on expeditions to the Highlands. On several occasions I have protested against the men being thus employed, and on one occasion I obtained from the then Secretary to the Admiralty an undertaking that greater care should be exercised in sanctioning the use of the Naval Forces in this way than had previously been displayed. Now, Sir, I wish to point out to the noble Lord that the employment of the Naval Forces in that part of the country has a most injurious effect in rendering the Naval Service of Her Majesty unpopular, on a ground which, above all others, is eminently adapted for the purposes of a recruiting ground. In the Western Highlands there is a race of hardy seafaring men, who are only too anxious to join Her Majesty's Naval Service, and who do, at the present time, largely serve Her Majesty as Naval Volunteers. It is suggested that emigration should be promoted among these people, but they might, with more advantage, be employed in the Mercantile Navy, so as to take the places now filled by thousands of foreigners in our merchant ships. Among the recommendations made in the Report of the Crofters Commission was one that naval training ships should be established along the shores of the Western Highlands; but for some reason or other Her Majesty's Government have not paid any attention to that recommendation. I must, however, protest against the employment of naval forces in connection with matters which ought only to come within the functions of the civil authorities and the police. The question of the employment of the military in connection with such things was ably dealt with in the admirable memorandum issued by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir W. Harcourt) when he was Home Secretary; but, unfortunately, since he left office the position he laid down has not been adhered to. I trust the noble Lord will be able to give us some assurance that none of the large increase which is proposed in the force of marines shall be employed in carrying out martial law and striking terror into the hearts of the Crofters in the Western Highlands; and that among his projects for strengthening the Navy he will avail himself of the recommendation made by the Crofters Commission for the establishment off the coasts of the Hebrides of training ships which would have the advantage of being fed by a population admirably fitted for Her Majesty's naval service, and who, as seafaring men, as soldiers, and as fighting men, are unsurpassed by any class of people in this kingdom.

DR. CLARK: I would also ask the noble Lord whether he will give us the assurance requested by my hon. Friend? If not, I shall be prepared to move a reduction of the Vote.

*LORD G. HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman the Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) has expressed a wish that a certain number of Highland Crofters should go into the merchant service, and for my part I think it would be a good thing if they did, because if they would only undertake that kind of service there would be no reason for sending the Marines into the Highlands to ensure the execution of the law. But I am unable to give the assurance asked for, because when the necessity arises the

military force must be used in support of the civil power.

DR. TANNER: I wish to ask a question with reference to the gunboat stationed in Bantry Bay. Is it the intention of the Admiralty in future to utilize that gunboat as a sort of steam packet for the conveyance of the forces of the Crown on particular occasions, instead of making use of the existing steam packet service?

*LORD G. HAMILTON: I believe it is true that the gunboat referred to is occasionally employed in the manner stated, and I do not see any objection to that arrangement.

DR. CAMERON: Before the Vote is passed I should like to ask what will be the next Vote?

*MR. GOSCHEN: Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway have succeeded in protracting the discussion of this Vote until midnight, and therefore, in accordance with the promise made by the First Lord of the Treasury, the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates cannot now be taken. But there is now an end of the matter. In consequence of the discussion which has gone on for the last hour, the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates cannot now be taken. It was distinctly understood that the Supplementary Civil Service Votes would be brought on at an earlier hour; and if any inconvenience is now caused, owing to the days for which they are put down, the responsibility will not rest with the Government. The Civil Service Estimates will be put down for to-morrow.

DR. CAMERON: I wish to point out, in reply to the lecture of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that if the Leader of the House had adhered to the pledge he gave on Wednesday night this difficulty would not have occurred.

Question put, and agreed to.

(4.) £1,061,100, Victualling and Clothing for the Navy.

*MR. W. J. LANE (Cork, Co., E.): I wish to call attention to a matter connected with this Vote. I have just received three letters from gentlemen in the City of Cork who are staunch supporters of Her Majesty's Government. They have for many years been contractors to the Government for the supply of pork to the Admiralty, and they complain that the contracts have now been given to Danish firms. I need not say that such contracts are of the greatest importance to the whole community in the South of Ireland. They are important to the landlord because they enable him to get his rent from the tenant; they are of importance to the shopkeeper because they give the farmers more money to spend; and they are of moment to mercantile communities such as the City of Cork because they afford employment for so many people. I believe, in fact, that in Cork City, these contracts gave constant employment to fully 500 people. One of my correspondents writes—

"It is a great shame that the Government should give the best part of the Navy contract to the Danes. Up to the present time we in Cork have provided the supply for Haulbowline—which was about one-third of the whole contract—but this year all the contracts have been given to Copenhagen."

The loss to Cork is about 3,930 casks, or, in cash, £25,000, and this all goes to a foreign shore. Surely the Admiralty ought to have very strong grounds for giving preference to the foreigner, and I believe that taxpayers and the community at large have great and just reasons for finding fault with the Admiralty Department in this matter. Another gentleman writes—

"The difference in price, is I believe, about 5 per cent, and, taking into account the quality, I think our pork would be cheaper in the end to the Navy."

The third gentleman writes—

"I hope that your action may, in some measure, redress the wrong under which the South of Ireland is suffering."

This shows what the loyal supporters of the present Government think of the action of the Admiralty in this matter. If it be true that the saving is only equal to 5 per cent, and that the quality of the Danish pork is inferior, I say there is no justification for taking £25,000 out of Irish trade channels and giving it to a foreigner. We hear a great deal about protection of home industries and of the desirability of encouraging the farmers of this country; but what is the use of all this talk on the Conservative benches if, when there is an opportunity of practically benefiting the agricultural community, the Government neglect it, and instead get their supplies from a foreign source?

I have no desire, Mr. Courtney, to trespass unduly on the time of the Committee, but I think this is a case of great hardship and injustice, and I hope the First Lord of the Admiralty will see if it is in his power to give us some assistance and some share of the Navy patronage. I believe the Admiralty have never complained of the class of goods supplied by the Cork contractors, and I hope that in future our claims will have fuller consideration.

*Lord G. HAMILTON: I agree that it is desirable, where possible, to foster our home industries. It has been the practice of the Admiralty to give a slight preference to home growers, but it was impossible for them to put aside the lowest tenders in favour of those which were higher. The difference in the price embodied in the tenders influenced the Department in refusing the Irish tenders. These are the main grounds for which the alteration has been made; but if the hon. Gentleman will get the merchants of Cork to take a little more trouble to improve the quality of their goods, I do not think they need fear competition from the Danes or from any country in the world.

*Mr. LANE: I cannot take any exception to the tone of the noble Lord's reply, but I do wish he had given us some idea as to the difference in price between the successful and unsuccessful contractors, which, he says, justified the Department in refusing the Irish tenders. I should be glad if he will also state if there has been a specific case of complaint against the Irish contractors which would justify the Government taking the contracts from them? We ought certainly to be allowed to supply the stores at Haulbowline.

*Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I am afraid I cannot give those particulars to-night; but if the hon. Member will hand me the correspondence I will inquire further into the matter.

Commander BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I wish to call the attention of the First Lord of the Admiralty to a small matter connected with rations issued to the Navy. I am not going to pass any general criticisms on the general rations served to the men; but occasionally we have to make exceptional demands on the men, and to turn them out at an early hour for very hard labour. Now, it has always been found that the work is done better if the men get some additional rations on these special occasions, and that it is better too for the men. The power to issue these extra rations is one we used to possess, and it was greatly appreciated by the men, as well as immensely beneficial to the work, and I think that it is an indulgence which might now be granted, under proper control.

*Lord G. HAMILTON: I will look into the matter. It was before the Board of Admiralty some time ago, but somehow it has escaped attention.

Vote agreed to.

Progress reported.

House resumed.

TOWN POLICE CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday 25th March.

MOTIONS.

—o—

BRIBERY (PUBLIC BODIES) PREVENTION BILL.

On Motion of Lord Randolph Churchill, Bill for the more effectual Prevention and Punishment of Bribery and Corruption of and by Members, Officers, or Servants of Corporations, Councils, Boards, Commissions, or other Public Bodies, ordered to be brought in by Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Henry James, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Jennings, and Mr. Richard Power.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 158.]

DEATHS FROM STARVATION (METROPOLIS)

Address for "Return of the number of al Deaths in the Metropolitan District in the year 1888, upon which a coroner's jury have returned a verdict of Death from Starvation, or Death accelerated by Privation (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 185, of Session 1888)."—(*Mr. John Talbot.*)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

No. 17.] FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 1889. [MARCH 23.

An Image at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 15th March, 1889.

DURATION OF SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT BILL. (NO. 21.)

A Bill to ascertain and limit the duration of speeches in Parliament — Presented by The Lord Denman; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL. (NO. 22.)

A Bill for extending the right of Voting at Parliamentary Elections to duly qualified women—Presented by The Lord Denman; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND). QUESTION.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Seeing my noble Friend the Secretary for Scotland in his place, I wish to ask him a question of which I have given him private notice—when it is proposed to introduce the Local Government Bill for Scotland, which was announced in the Queen's Speech? My noble Friend is aware that the meeting of the Commissioners of Supply will take place at the end of April, and that of the Convention of Royal Burghs in May; and it would be a great convenience to these bodies, who are largely interested in this matter, if the Bills can be introduced in sufficient time to allow of their being considered by those bodies at their meetings.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: In answer to my noble Friend, I am afraid I am not able to give any very positive undertaking as to when the Local Government Bill for Scotland will be introduced. It is proposed to bring in the Bill in the other House, but the time of its introduction will depend on the state of public business in that House. At the same time I can assure my noble Friend that the Government are anxious to bring in the Bill at the earliest possible opportunity, and one of the reasons for their being thus anxious is, that these bodies—the Commissioners of Supply and the Convention of Royal Burghs—may have an opportunity of considering the Bills at their meetings.

STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE. REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN): My Lords, on the last occasion when the Report of the Committee appointed by this House to examine the Standing Orders of the House referring to public business was discussed, it appeared to be the unanimous opinion of your Lordships that an opportunity should be afforded to the House to discuss each and all of the proposed Amendments in detail, and also that such discussion could more conveniently take place when the House was in Committee. I have not been able to find any actual precedent for such a course, but I do not see any valid reason why one should not be created, and if it be the pleasure of the House, I will move that the House now dissolve itself into a Committee to consider this Report.

Moved, That the House do resolve itself into a Committee to consider the Report of the Select Committee on the Standing Orders of the House of Lords relating to the conduct of public business (L. Privy Seal [*E. Cadogan*]), agreed to.

House in Committee accordingly.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, before any of the Standing Orders in which the

Committee have made any alteration are reached, there is one in respect of which a notice of Amendment has been given by the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Fitz Gerald).

LORD FITZ GERALD: I must ask your Lordships to pardon me for proposing the Amendment of which I have given notice, or for intervening at all in questions concerning the Standing Orders, because I must admit that I do not carry with me the aid of any experience, but my great object is to keep these Orders right in point of law, and possibly I may be able to give the House a little assistance in that view, and in that view only. Now, if your Lordships will look at Standing Order 2 on page 5, it is—

"At the beginning of a Parliament, after prayers shall have been said, and the Lord Chancellor shall have taken the oath appointed to be taken, according to the Act of Parliament made for that purpose."

Your Lordships will recollect that these Standing Orders were arranged by the Committee last year, and I believe they were published before the Autumn Recess. But during the Autumn Sitting a very important Act of Parliament passed. The Bill was first of al brought into the Commons by Mr. Bradlaugh, and altered by the Solicitor General, and in this House it was taken up by my noble Friend, whose absence at this moment I regret (Earl Spencer). That Act made a very great alteration in the law. According to the law as it now stands, the Lord Chancellor is not bound to take any oath. This Standing Order proposes to put upon the Lord Chancellor the obligation of taking an oath—the oath appointed by a previous Act of Parliament. The Act passed in the Autumn Session of last year applies to every oath from that of Her Majesty the Queen down to that of Her humblest subject. If a person says that he has a conscientious objection to taking the oath, or that it is contrary to his religious opinion to do so, or if he says he has no religious opinions, then in either of those cases, upon making that declaration, he is entitled, in the place of an oath, to make a solemn affirmation. Now, in the case of a Lord Chancellor who objected to take the oath on either of the grounds stated, the Act would allow him to make an affirmation. That state of the law renders this Standing Order, as it is now proposed, inconsistent. The Amendment which I propose in this Order is, after the worth "oath," to insert the words "or solemn affirmation."

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS): I think it will be my duty to point out to the House that it is not in accordance with the practice of the House to discuss an Amendment to a Standing Order without notice has been given referring to that particular Standing Order. The present position is that the House has resolved itself into Committee to consider the Report of the Select Committee on the Standing Orders—the Select Committee have not reported upon this particular Standing Order; it has only reported upon those which are proposed to be amended, added to, or omitted. I think it my duty to draw the attention of the House to that.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I should like to ask the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Herschell) whether he agrees in the view put forward by the noble and learned Lord (Lord Fitz Gerald) that the Standing Order as proposed would be inconsistent with the recent Statute allowing affirmation in place of oath?

LORD HERSCHELL: The Act referred to simply says that on all occasions upon which an oath is required by any Act of Parliament an affirmation may be substituted.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: But unfortunately this Standing Order is not an Act of Parliament.

LORD HERSCHELL: The Act provides that "in all cases where an oath is required by law to be taken" an affirmation may be substituted, and I take it that the requirements of this Standing Order would come under those words.

LORD FITZ GERALD: This depends upon the construction, not of the Standing Orders, but of the Act itself, and the words of the Act are—

"That every person objecting to be sworn, and stating as the ground of such objection either that he has no religious belief, or that the taking of an oath is contrary to his religious belief, shall be permitted to make a solemn affirmation."

I take it that the Amendment I propose is necessary in order to keep the Standing Orders according to law.

*LORD GRIMTHORPE: Surely the noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell) is right, because this oath is made under an Act of Parliament, not created by the Standing Orders.

*EARL CADOGAN: I think, after the explanation that has been given by the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Herschell), the noble and learned Lord (Lord Fitz Gerald) will feel that his Amendment is not necessary. With regard to the objection suggested by the noble Duke in the Chair, I should not wish to press any objection of that kind, because I am sure the House will be glad to discuss Amendments to any of the Standing Orders, although they are not affected by the Report of the Select Committee.

LORD FITZ GERALD: I am afraid I must withdraw the Amendment, as I do not find my views receive any support.

Amendment withdrawn.

*EARL CADOGAN: The first Amendment suggested by the Select Committee is on page 10, Standing Order No. 4. It is proposed, at line 12, to leave out the words—

"Though they shall desire the same."

I will read the sentence—

"No such Peers may or shall be introduced into the House of Peers by any herald, or with any ceremony, though they shall desire the same."

It is proposed to leave out the latter words.

Amendment agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: The next Amendment I have to move is on page 12. This is the insertion of a new Standing Order No. 16A—

"The absence of any Lord from this House, except for sufficient reason, shall not prevent the Committee of Selection from calling for his services."

I may point out that this is taken verbatim from a Standing Order which stood in the former Orders which will be found in the Appendices.

The addition was agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: The next is also an addition No. 16B—

"Lords may obtain leave of absence at the pleasure of the House upon cause shown."

The addition was agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: Next, I beg to move the omission of Standing Order No. 17, which is on page 12, and which reads—

"When the House is sitting, every Lord that shall enter is to give and receive salutations from the rest, and not to sit down in his place unless he hath made an obeisance to the Cloth of Estate."

Omission agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: The next Standing Order which is proposed to be altered is Standing Order No. 20. It is proposed that the provision as to business of which notice has been given and as to Private Bill proceedings shall read as follows:—

"Any business for which notice is not required, and all proceedings relating to Private Bills, may be entered upon before the Notices of the day are called for; but the House will proceed with the Notices in preference to other matters at any time after half-past Four o'clock, at the request of any Lord who may have a notice on the Minutes."

The time mentioned in the present Standing Order is a quarter-past 5.

The Amendment was agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: Then, my Lords, it is proposed to add at the end of Standing Order 20—

"If at the close of the speech of any Lord it shall be moved that the business then in hand be adjourned, or, the House being in Committee, that the House be resumed, and it shall be so ordered, it shall be lawful for the House thereupon, without notice given, to make further order that the business in question shall be taken first, either at some later hour of the evening or on some future sitting-day to be then fixed."

The object of this, as I explained to your Lordships on the last occasion of our discussing these Standing Orders, is to provide not only that the House shall be enabled to adjourn any business at any given time, but that it shall be possible to take up the question which has been so adjourned either later in the evening or first in order at the next Sitting of the House.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP suggested that instead of the Amendment being added to Order 20 it should form a separate Order.

*EARL CADOGAN agreed to the suggestion.

The addition was agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: The next alterations are on page 16 in Order 24. First of all there is the addition of the words—

"Except by permission of the House."

after the words—

"Every Lord is to speak standing and uncovered."

I will first move that addition.

The addition was agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: Then it is proposed in the same Order to strike out the words prohibiting our calling one another by our names, instead of referring to one another as we do at present simply as noble Lords. My Lords, the object of the proposed change in reference to our mode of alluding to each other in debate is that it has been found inconvenient and almost impossible to describe accurately the noble Lord to whom reference is meant to be made. Another inconvenience has been found to arise —namely, that in newspaper reports of speeches, where a noble Lord has been referred to, it has frequently happened that the reporter has inserted in brackets the name of some noble Lord other than the noble Lord actually referred to. I may point out that the alteration leaves the matter entirely permissive; it does not prevent any Peer from alluding to noble Lords present in the way in which we have hitherto done, but it does not prohibit the calling by name.

LORD DE ROS: I cannot see any argument in support of this Amendment. As the Order stands, it has been in operation for a very great number of years, and I think that if we addressed each other by name it might be, in some cases, invidious. Surely the reporters can easily find out who the Lord is to whom reference is made as "the noble Lord who spoke last," or "last but one," and so forth.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I wish, my Lords, to record my experience of the extreme clumsiness of the present practice. It is almost impossible, sometimes, to indicate the noble Lord to whom one wishes to refer. I venture, at least, to make this appeal—that if the House will not accept this alteration, it will, at any rate, allow the benches to be numbered, so that we may speak of "the noble Lord sitting on bench No. so and so."

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: I have never heard of any difficulty arising such as would warrant this alteration. It is a small matter, I quite admit; but this is one of the links with the past, and I do not see why we should sever those links unless there is some serious difficulty which necessitates our so doing. This is not a matter which need be discussed at any length; but while fully appreciating the necessity of improvements, I very much object to change simply for the sake of change, and this seems to me a departure from ancient traditions which are founded on very sound reasons. There can be no doubt that, if debate is heated or excited, some little restraint in the manner in which we speak of each other is not without advantage. I, therefore, sincerely hope that your Lordships will adhere to the old Order, which has come down to us with the sanction of the past. Of course, it may be said that this is only permissive; but no one can doubt that, if the Amendment is adopted, the new practice will become general, and I do not think it will conduce to our dignity and decorum.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): From the short experience I have had in your Lordships' House, I am very much disposed to favour this alteration. In former days, when Peers used to come down in their Orders, reference could be made to "the noble Lord in the blue ribbon" or "the noble Lord in the red ribbon," and so on, and no difficulty arose. We have now nothing of that sort, and great inconvenience often arises. After all, the old practice would very likely continue generally, but I think it would be well if this permission were given, so that on occasion the actual names might be mentioned.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: This proposal seems similar to the regulation existing in the House of Commons, that Members shall be addressed by the names of their constituencies instead of by their own names. Your Lordships' debates are so orderly, and so generally free from all personality, that possibly that reason does not exist here. I have no very great feeling upon the matter, but I think there is some advantage in a debate, where speakers follow each other rapidly, in being able to point to a noble Lord by name instead of by some allocutory process.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I may just give one instance of the inconvenience to which the present practice gives rise.

On this side of the House we have no less than three noble Lords who have been Viceroys of Ireland, and the reference by any Member of this House to "the noble Lord the late Viceroy of Ireland" leads to considerable confusion. I think the proposed change will obviate a great deal of practical inconvenience. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) suggested—I do not know whether seriously—the numbering of the benches. Certainly an alteration of some kind is urgently required, because we have not all the force of wit of the noble Marquess, and some noble Lords, in endeavouring to properly indicate the noble Lord he wishes to refer to, may arrive at something like a nickname, which is, I am sure, a sort of designation quite unworthy of your Lordships' House. I cordially support the Amendment.

The Amendment was agreed to.

EARL CADOGAN: The next alteration is on page 16 in Standing Order 25. It is proposed to insert some new words, which will make the Order read as follows:—

"No Lord is to speak twice to any Bill, at one time of reading it, or to any other proposition, except the Mover in reply, unless it be to explain himself, in some material point of his speech (no new matter being introduced), and that not without the leave of the House first obtained."

The Amendment was agreed to.

EARL CADOGAN: On page 21 there is an Amendment proposed in Order 30, to strike out from the provision with regard to Division Lists the words—

"But in cases in which any [noble Lord] have higher or more ancient titles or dignities, the higher or more ancient title or dignity shall be added in brackets."

The Amendment was agreed to.

EARL CADOGAN: The next Amendment is on the subject of a quorum. I beg to move the following new Standing Order, which your Lordships will find on page 22, numbered 30A:—

"If, on a Division upon any stage of a Bill, it shall appear that Thirty Lords are not present in the House, the Lord Speaker shall declare the question not decided, but the debate thereon adjourned to the next sitting of the House; and if such Division take place when the House is in Committee, the Chairman shall delare the question not decided, whereupon the House shall resume, and shall be again in Committee at the next sitting of the House."

The object of this new Standing Order is to provide for a quorum, to avoid what has been considered almost to approach a scandal at times—namely, the rejection by this House, when a wholly inadequate number of your Lordships have been present, of Bills which have passed the other House of Parliament. I may, perhaps, mention that I believe the Committee fixed the number 30 as having the same relation to the number of Peers in this House as the figure 40 in use in the other House of Parliament has to the number of Members of that House. I ought not, perhaps, to anticipate any discussion that may take place upon the Amendment of my noble Friend (Lord Colville of Culross) to reduce the figure from 30 to 20; but I may say that, as a matter of fact, very few Divisions have taken place in which under 30 have voted, and when these abnormally small Divisions have taken place, I find, upon reference, that the number present has been under 20. Therefore, putting the quorum at 20 would, in that respect at all events, be no improvement. I may mention also an objection which was raised by the noble Lord, whom I believe I may now mention by name —["No!"]—I must describe him then as sitting first on the Bench No. 2 below the Gangway (Lord Stratheden and Campbell). I believe that noble Lord suggested that it might be possible to defeat measures in this House by a sort of side wind—by Peers simply absenting themselves from the House instead of voting against particular measures. But I may point out that this paragraph merely defers the decision. The words are—

"The Chairman shall declare the question not decided, whereupon the House shall resume, and shall be again in Committee at the next Sitting of the House."

Consequently, if there be not a sufficient number of Peers present to insure a decision one day, the promoters of the Bill have it in their power to endeavour to bring up their friends on the following day. I cannot really think that the number of 30 Peers is an unobtainable quorum.

LORD COLVILLE OF CULROSS: I rise, my Lords, to move to reduce the proposed quorum from 30 to 20. Notwithstanding what has been said by my noble Friend who moved this Order, I

think your Lordships will understand what difficulty would arise at the end of a protracted Session—say towards the end of August, as has frequently happened,—if the number 30 were to be retained in this Standing Order. I cannot but think that what might be valuable measures would not find their place on the Statute Book. I must remind your Lordships that in the Select Committee which sat upon these Orders the number of 30 was only carried by a majority of one.

LORD HERSCHELL: I should like to point out to the noble Lord who spoke last that the matter upon which there was a Division was not that which he points out to the House. The proposal in support of which there was a majority of one was an Amendment that no less than 20 Lords should have voted in the majority, which is, of course, a different thing to the proposal that 20 only should be present in the House. The object of providing for 30 Members was that complaint had been made that measures from the House of Commons were rejected in your Lordships' House upon occasions when there was a very limited number of Lords present. The reason for fixing 30 was because that represented the same proportion to the number of your Lordships' House as the Commons quorum of 40 represents to the number of Members of that House.

*LORD GRIMTHORPE: The objection to the proposal as it now stands seems to be this—that if there are 20 votes for a Motion it would be carried if 30 Members were present; but if 30 Members were present, although less than 20 might vote for the Motion, it could not be carried. That seems to be rather an absurd result. Therefore, I think that what was suggested in the Committee is the better plan—namely, that 20 Peers should be required to vote for the Resolution.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: If we decide that there shall be a majority of 20 in favour of the Motion it will have a much more restrictive result, because, suppose there are 37 Peers in the House and 18 voted one way and 19 the other, a proposition would not be carried, the number voting in favour being just short of 20, although there were 37 Peers present. I do not feel very strongly upon this point myself, but I am not in favour of any needless change in our constitution. I may just make this remark, that it is no use comparing the two Houses in considering this matter of a quorum, because there are a great number of your Lordships who do not take their seats at all, and the actual number of Members of this House who take part in its business is very much below the number of your Lordships' Roll.

*LORD BRABOURNE: I think, my Lords, we should be very careful in restricting ourselves at all. It is, of course, harder to get 30 Peers together than it is to get 20, and, therefore, I should be in favour of the latter figure as against the former; moreover, the larger the number necessary to the passing of a Bill, especially towards the close of a Session, the greater the encouragement to a small minority to divide against the measure, and the greater the probability that they might defeat it. I think it would be wiser that there should be no restriction at all.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: With regard to this question of a quorum, clearly it cannot be a matter of very great difficulty to obtain 30 Peers even at the end of the Session. The number of official Peers alone is 25, and of course they would all be prepared to give their full attention to the public service. I may say that I think it would be discreditable to this House if it were to be understood that there is any difficulty in collecting together 30 Peers to transact public business.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I think the noble Lord opposite (Lord Rosebery) has over-estimated the number of official Peers. I cannot agree with the suggestion that there should be required a majority numbering 20 in favour of a Resolution, because, although there were 38 Peers in the House, it might be impossible to obtain the requisite majority, and it would be impossible to carry on the business, which would be a very bad result. Therefore, on the whole, I am inclined to agree with the proposal of the Select Committee.

Question put, "That the word 20 be substituted for the word 30," and negatived.

Question put, "That this paragraph be added to the Standing Orders of the House," and agreed to.

EARL CADOGAN: The next Amendment is at page 24 in Order 34, which your Lordships will remember provided that Bills brought from the Commons should be dropped if not taken up within 12 sitting days. It is proposed to add to that Rule—

"Except after 12 sitting days Notice given by a Lord of the Second Reading thereof, provided that such Notice shall not be given after the 1st day of August."

It has sometimes happened that Members of the House of Commons who had charge of a Bill sent up here have omitted to obtain the assistance of noble Lords to pilot it through this House; and not being aware of this restriction of 12 sitting days, the Bill has lapsed, because no noble Lord has taken charge of it. It is proposed now that in such a case, after 12 sitting days' notice given by a Lord, the Bill shall be again taken up; but there is a proviso that such notice shall not be given after the 1st of August.

LORD FITZ GERALD: I propose, my Lords, to reduce the number of days' notice from 12 to five, for this reason. Twelve sitting days means three weeks' notice, because we only sit here four days in the week. In the case of a Bill lapsing in consequence of not being moved, its revival upon 12 sitting days' notice would in many cases be insufficient to prevent the loss of the Bill. I propose to substitute five sitting days, because that would really give a notice of nearly nine clear days. It is not always through a slip on the part of the promoters that a Bill is not properly looked after in this House; it is often found very difficult to get a noble Lord to take charge of some complicated measure.

After conversation it was agreed that the word "eight" should be substituted for the word "twelve" in the Amendment; and the Amendment, thus altered, was agreed to.

EARL CADOGAN: My Lords, the next is at page 25. It is proposed to omit Standing Order 37 which reads—

"Every Lord is to sit in his due place when the House is put into a Committee."

The omission was agreed to.

EARL CADOGAN: Now, my Lords, we come to page 27, where your Lordships will see eight new Standing Orders which deal with the appointment of Standing Committees. On the former occasion my noble Friend behind me (Earl Beauchamp) remonstrated with me for not having shown any cause why Standing Orders should be provided at all in this House, and I am bound to say I had intended giving him some reasons; but I thought that we should take each Standing Order in turn, and that I might, perhaps, explain the proposal when it came to its turn. One of the noble Lords opposite (the Earl of Kimberley) explained very fully and clearly the chief object of this Standing Order. It is, undoubtedly, one of the chief functions of this House to revise, and if necessary to amend, the various Bills which come up to us from the other House of Parliament; and although it is an undoubted fact that the Committees of the whole House in the House of Lords do, when they address themselves to the task, examine thoroughly every measure that is submitted to them, yet it is also true that there are a large number of Bills which, perhaps, are not of any general interest, but which are none the less important, which are allowed to pass through this House with a very slight examination and next to no discussion. That being the case, it was felt by the Committee that it would be well to provide Standing Committees to whom such Bills should be referred. I think I might point out to the House that the labours of these Standing Committees will not, after all, be very arduous, and that although each would consist of 50 Members, the quorum is fixed as low as 12. Therefore, I do not think that any noble Lord would be justified in pleading that his engagements on Private Bill Committees or any other legislative work which he may be called upon to perform would prevent his serving upon these Standing Committees. Certainly, if any objection is made to the appointment of these Standing Committees on account of the difficulty of finding noble Lords to act on Private Bill Committees, all I can say is that I think the public business should take precedence of the private business. I defer any other observation until I hear what objections can be made to these proposed Standing Orders. I think I shall be in order if I read the first paragraph, and the discussion can be taken upon that—

"At the commencement of each Session of Parliament Standing Committees shall be appointed, to one or other of which, unless the House shall otherwise order, every Bill shall be committed, instead of to a Committee of the whole House; and, on the Report of the Standing Committee being received, the Bill shall not be re-committed unless the House so order."

LORD FITZGERALD rose to move an Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Might I interpose for one moment? As this is a question of procedure, it would be much better for the House to decide upon the principle of the Standing Order before we go to the discussion of subordinate questions.

LORD FITZGERALD: I am quite content.

*LORD COLVILLE OF CULROSS: My Lords, I beg to move the rejection of the whole of the Standing Orders for creating these Standing Committees. The excellent manner in which the business of this House has always been performed is notorious, and it is thoroughly recognized, and I venture to think that such a radical alteration as this is perfectly unnecessary. It will lead to a great waste and frittering away of a portion of the very best working power of the House of Lords. I shall have to trouble your Lordships with a few figures to support my views. The actual number of the Peers who have taken their seats up to this date is 443. But from this number you must deduct a list of those who, as a rule, are exempt from taking part in the Committee business of the House. They are the Members of the Royal Family, the Spiritual Peers, Cabinet Ministers, and certain of the Members of the Government, Law Lords, diplomatists, and some Colonial Governors who, although they have taken their seats in this Session of Parliament, are now absent from England. Upon examination I put that number to be about 60 Peers. If you subtract 60 Peers from the number who have taken their seats there remains 383, which we may call the working power of the House. Now, my Lords, assuming that the principle of Standing Committees be adopted to the full extent contemplated, there will be four Committees of 50 Peers, or 200, *plus* Peers to be selected by the Committee by the Committee of election, 40 more, making a total number of 240 Peers absorbed in these Standing Committees. Now, my Lords, the private business of this House has hitherto been done by a limited number of Peers. During the last six years the average number in each Session has been 71. I may here say that before a Joint Committee of both Houses that sat last Session upon the subject of Private Bill legislation, of which I had the honour of being a Member, the highest possible character was given to the manner in which the House of Lords performed its duties in Private Bill legislation. There is a noble and learned Lord sitting not far from me now (Lord Grimthorpe) who paid the greatest compliment to the House of Lords' Private Bill Committees, and especially to the business qualities of the Chairman of the Committees. Mr. Pope, the Leader of the Parliamentary Bar, considered that the House of Lords' Committees discharged their duties with more efficiency than those of the House of Commons. Now, it may be taken for granted that these, what I may call, excellent men-of-business Peers to whom I have alluded will always be upon these Standing Committees, so that we shall have to look to the residuum of the House—which after deducting the 240 from the working power of 383 who have taken their seats will not be more than 143 Peers—to do the Private Bill business; and any Special Committee work, such as has been going on at the present time—the Sweating Committee and the Poor Law Committee—and in that residuum will be found Peers of bad health, of advanced age, having other occupations, non-resident in London, rarely taking much interest in the business of the House. We had a very important witness on the Joint Committee last year in Sir John Mowbray, who has for 16 years been Chairman of the Committee of Selection of the House of Commons. Sir John Mowbray gave evidence as to the great difficulty which now exists in the formation of Private Bill Committees in the House of Commons. He considers it arises from the great number of various Commissions and Committees which now exist, including the Grand Committees. Now, I have been told that these Standing Committees are not like Grand Committees. All I can say is, they are so much like each other that you will not be able to tell one from the*

other; they are both large Committees; those in the House of Commons consist of 86, and these Standing Committees will consist of 50. Sir John Mowbray instanced the refusal of Members to serve on Private Bill Committees, because they belonged to other Committees. I feel perfectly confident, my Lords, that the same difficulty and the same state of things will arise here if this Standing Order is carried out. I entirely agree with Sir John Mowbray upon that point; and, although this new Rule is said to apply only to public business, I am perfectly sure that it will have a good deal of influence upon the private business of the House also. I speak with considerable experience of the business of this House. I have been, I believe, for 35 years on the Committee of Selection; and for 20 years I was the Whip of one of the political Parties in this House, and that induces me to give what opposition I can to this Order. I will quote the authority of a noble Lord who is not here now (Lord Cork), but who, like myself, has taken great part for many years in the business of the House. He thoroughly concurs in the view that I have taken on this subject, and if he were here he would give me his best support. I also oppose this Order for another cause. I do not think it is quite the time to suggest such a course. The Joint Committee, to which I have referred, reported last Session, and upon their Report a Bill has been introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Craig Sellar. The Bill was chiefly founded upon the recommendation of a Member of the present Government (Mr. Stanhope). I conclude, therefore, that the Government will support the measure in the other House, which is greatly attributable to one of its own Members. Surely, it would be far better that we should wait till we know what effect this new measure may have upon the views of Parliament, before we commit ourselves to some great alteration of our Standing Rules in this House. The Prime Minister has stated in the debate that this is not a Party question; and he further has told us that no pressure ought to be put on any Members of the Government on this question. I do hope that you will appreciate the old adage of "let well alone," and that you will give me assistance in my Motion, which is to reject any alteration such as is instanced in this new Standing Order. I beg to move the rejection of all that relates to these Standing Committees.

*LORD BRABOURNE: In seconding the Amendment I should like to make just one observation and to adduce one argument. The observation is this: these Standing Committees or Grand Committees in the House of Commons have been adopted from time to time for this reason—the pressure of business has been so great that it was necessary to establish them as a remedy for that difficulty. Now, your Lordships' complaint is precisely the contrary—that you do not get enough business here. Nobody complains of the way you perform the business, but you do not get sufficient. Therefore, to meet a disease of exactly an opposite character, you are asked to apply the same remedy. But, my Lords, my objection to these Standing Committees rests upon something wider and broader than anything that my noble Friend has advanced. I say that by the Constitution of this country every Peer in Parliament has at present a full right to consider the detail of every measure which is brought before your Lordships. This is distinctly a measure of disfranchisement. You are going to divide 200 Members—it may or may not be the best portion of your Lordships' House—into four fifties. One 50 will be able to discuss a Bill of a certain class or character, and the other 150 Lords who are considering other Bills will be to that extent disfranchised unless your Lordships make some special order that the Bill in question shall be submitted to the consideration of the whole House instead of being committed to the Grand Committee. I protest against this disfranchisement—I do not think the bulk of your Lordships' House have done anything to deserve it. I do not see that it is called for by any very great pressure of business which your Lordships' House is unable to perform according to its present method of transacting business.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, if I agreed with the premisses of the noble Lord opposite who opposes these Standing Orders, I should certainly agree with his conclusion also, but I confess that I am not under the impression that it is notorious that we do our work, which is one of the most important func-

tions of the Second Chamber—the work of revising carefully the legislation which comes before it—in so efficient a manner as to leave nothing to be desired. On the contrary, I appeal to your Lordships whether it is not the case that a Bill that comes before this House, unless it be what one may call a Bill of primary importance, or one which excites great contention, passes through your Lordships' House without any consideration in Committee at all. Unless there happens to be some one or more of your Lordships who take an interest in the measure, and look into it and call the attention of this House to any inconsistencies or inconveniencies that may arise from oversight in the legislation, the measure may pass into law without any sort of revision whatever. Now, my Lords, the object of this Standing Order is to enable your Lordships' House to discharge more efficiently what I believe to be one of its most important functions. It does not, and it is not intended to, withdraw from the consideration of your Lordships, or from your Lordships' sanction as regards the details of the measure, any power whatsoever. If these Standing Orders are passed as framed, there will be an opportunity for every one of your Lordships who chooses to move any Amendment whatsoever on any detail of any Bill that is before this House. There is, as I apprehend my noble Friend (Lord Brabourne) is perfectly well aware, a stage of Report, upon which you are just as much at liberty to discuss the details of the Bill, and move Amendments to it as you are in Committee.

*LORD BRABOURNE: A Peer can only speak once on Report.

LORD HERSCHELL: What I mean is, that after a measure has been thoroughly discussed in Committee and the Report of the Committee received upon it, noble Lords will be then in a position to deal with it when it comes before the House on the Report; but further than that, the House reserves to itself, in regard to any measure which, in the judgment of the House, ought to be further considered in detail, full power to commit it to a Committee of the whole House, although it has been to one of the Standing Committees; and, with that proviso, I cannot understand the suggestion that it would withdraw from Members of this House any powers that they now possess of looking at the details of the Bill. Then the noble Lord opposite (Lord Brabourne) says that it would withdraw from the House the power of looking into Bills—we do not look into them now. I advocate the appointment of these Standing Committees on the very ground that Bills are not looked into—they are not examined—no one takes any interest in them, and the consequence is that we have measures passed into law in such a condition that litigation is certain to result. My Lords, that will become increasingly the case, because the other House acts now, one may almost say, at high pressure. The larger measures are no doubt better looked into, but the minor measures, when they are passed by the House of Commons now, are generally passed without discussion. You can only get these small Bills passed if they are passed without discussion, and the consequence is that they come up to this House in a condition in which they ought not to pass into law—in a condition in which their promoters would not desire them to pass into law, if the matter were properly considered and put before them. This duty of revision, I venture to say, is not properly performed at the present time. Perhaps it ought to be, but when the noble Lord objects to an Amendment of the Standing Orders such as is proposed on the ground that it is unnecessary, whatever other objection there may be to it, I am perfectly unable to understand that objection, because it was the strong conviction of that necessity which I am sure induced the members of the Special Committee to recommend this Standing Order to your Lordships' House. So much as to the necessity, except one word with regard to the Standing Committees of the House of Commons of which the noble Lord opposite spoke. I have had experience of those Standing Committees, and I do not hesitate to say that the legislation which passed through the examination of those Standing Committees was far better in its form than it ever would have been if it had merely gone through a Committee of the whole House. When a measure is scrutinised in this way by a Grand Committee, there is proper attention directed to its details, and it is evolved in a shape in which it would

not evolve from a Committee of the whole House. Nothing has been more satisfactory in that respect than the working of those Committees. They have dealt with the measures before them always in a thoroughly business-like and practical spirit, and an earnest desire to legislate in the best possible form, and no desire to occupy time merely by needless alteration. Now, with regard to the practical difficulties, I think they have been overrated by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Brabourne). In the first place this Standing Order does not bind the House to the appointment of four Standing Committees—four is the extreme limit. It is "not more than four." Therefore, if it were found impossible to obtain consistently with the ordinary duties of the House four Standing Committees, there is nothing to bind the House to appoint four. Nor is 50 Members the necessary minimum. 50 is the maximum—it is to be "not more than 50"; it does not say not less. Therefore, there will be, I think, no practical difficulty in accommodating the number of these Standing Committees to the wants of the House in ordinary respects. But, my Lords, there are two other observations I should like to make. One is that, besides the 380 noble Lords whom the noble Lord left after deducting the official Members for the business of the House, there are, I believe, between 30 and 40 other noble Lords who have not at the present time taken the oath, and who are entitled to do so. I trust that this House does not mean to proclaim to the public that those noble Lords are unwilling to give the necessary time and attention to perform what this House may deem to be a necessary duty. I have no doubt if it were found that their services were really required, some of those noble Lords would take the oath. The noble Lord must remember that on these Standing Committees there would be many of those who are exempt from Private Bill Committees who would undoubtedly serve. They may be exempt from Private Bill Committees, but it does not follow that their services would not be required, and would not be at once given, upon these Standing Committees. I apprehend, with regard to many of them, they certainly would be. Then there is another matter which also is worthy of attention, and that is that there is no provision in this Standing Order as to the time at which these Standing Committees shall sit, and it would be perfectly open to the House, if there proved to be difficulty in other respects, to determine that these Standing Committees should sit after any questions have been put on one of the days of public business during the ordinary time of the sitting of this House for public business. That would get rid of one of the serious difficulties to which the noble Lord has called attention. My Lords, I consider this matter of very great importance, and I firmly believe that the result of appointing these Committees would be that both the legislation initiated in your Lordships' House and the legislation which comes from the other House would pass into law in much better form than it does at present. The difficulties and the inconsistencies which are found at present after the passing of Acts would not be found; litigation would be avoided, and the legislation of the country would be rendered more effective. These are the reasons why I strongly support this Standing Order; and I can assure the noble Lord opposite (Lord Brabourne) that it is not from any desire to disfranchise any Members of this House, nor do I believe that they will find themselves in a position to perform one whit less of their duty to the public than they do at the present time.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: My Lords, I desire to say a very few words upon this subject. There is one remark in which I thoroughly agree with the noble Lord opposite (Lord Herschell), that this is a subject of the greatest importance. The noble and learned Lord says that the business of this House, when Bills are in Committee, is not satisfactorily carried out. I believe that if there is one function of this House that is better performed than another it is when a Bill is in Committee of the House of Lords, when every Peer is in attendance, and those Peers who think that they know something of the measure under consideration give the benefit of their experience and their knowledge of the subject; and I think I am right in saying that there is no Bill that is discussed in Committee of the House of Lords but comes out of it in a better shape than when it went in. Now, the

noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell) says that he does not propose to deal with Bills of the first importance by Standing Committees. I understand him, therefore, to lay down that Bills of the first importance would be discussed as at present in a Committee of the House of Lords, and he reserves for those measures which he considers not of primary importance the reference to Standing Committees.

LORD HERSCHELL: I did not attempt to draw any distinction as to importance. It was what I called the contentious measures of the Session, which were sure to provoke discussion, that these Committees would not consider.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: Then I understand the noble and learned Lord to say that he professes to set up Standing Committees for the purpose of dealing with measures that are not of a contentious character. Well, it strikes me that those measures can be equally well considered in a Committee of the House of Lords and are well considered now, but if there is a special measure which requires, according to the idea of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell), special inquiry, your Lordships have power to refer that particular Bill to a Committee, upon which you elect those Peers who either take an interest in the measure or who may thoroughly understand the question. The noble and learned Lord says, supposing these Bills go to the Standing Committee, there is nothing to prevent any Member of the House from discussing them and moving Amendments upon the Report. I would ask the noble and learned Lord what chance he thinks a peer would have of amending a Bill that had passed through the ordeal of a Standing Committee. Would not the argument at once be put that the Bill had been thoroughly discussed and thrashed out in the Standing Committee upstairs, and therefore the time of the House should not be wasted upon it? The noble and learned Lord says that some Bills are not amended as they should be. But why is that? It is in the power of the House to discuss any and every Bill, and I venture to assert that the reason why Bills are unamended is that they do not require amendment. There are plenty of Peers in this House who take part in the business of the House, and who would bring under the consideration of your Lordships any Amendment to a Bill which they thought were necessary. I think that, with regard to the private legislation of this House, nothing is more perfect. I have always understood from members of the legal profession who practsie before both Houses of Parliament that the Private Bill Legislation of this House is carried out even better than in the House of Commons, and I was astonished to hear my noble Friend below (Earl Cadogan), in moving this Standing Order, say that the public business of this House must give way to private legislation.

EARL CADOGAN: I said the reverse, that public business must come before the private business of the House.

THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND GORDON: My noble Friend talks of the Private Bill Legislation of this House as if it were a small matter. He says that it should be secondary to public business. Does not my noble Friend know that there are Bills that are promoted in this House, and which come up to this House for discussion, in which millions of money are involved, in which the interests of vast numbers of people are concerned; and, when my noble Friend below me (Earl Cadogan) says that it is perfectly easy for a noble Lord to sit upon the Standing Committees and also to attend to the private business of the House, I do not think he can have thoroughly looked into the matter. I had the honour of presiding over a Committee which dealt with the Manchester Ship Canal Bill. The undertaking involved, I think, something like eight millions of money, and we sat for 42 consecutive days. How would it be possible for me, being the Chairman of that Committee, to take any part whatever in any discussion that took place upon any measure referred to one of the Standing Committees? My Lords, I feel very strongly upon this matter. I think we had much better leave things as they are. The noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell) says that contentious measures would not go to Standing Committees, and, therefore, I think I may assume that what would come before the Standing Committees would be matters of less importance than those greater measures which he

himself proposes should be discussed in Committee of the whole House.

*THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I am not able to take quite the optimist view that is taken by the noble and learned Lord behind me, of the manner in which we deal with public business in Committee—public Bills, I mean, of the order to which the noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell) referred. My impression is that they are very little dealt with in this House, that there is very little control exercised over them. It is not the business of the Government, whose Bills they mostly are, to criticize them, and nobody else thinks that it is their business to look after them. But I think that this matter is perhaps best argued by referring to what has actually taken place, and I examined for the purpose the Statutes that passed in the year 1887. I am only referring to the Acts which were put upon the Statute Book. There were 73 put upon the Statute Book during 1887. Of these seven are Money Bills and one a Mutiny Bill, and we must put them aside. Of the remaining 65 there were 2 that are what the noble Lord would call contentious measures—I mean they were the Irish Land Bill and the Crimes Bill. They, of course, received full discussion in Committee of this House, and that would never be changed. As to the remaining 63, I examined by reference to *Hansard* to ascertain how many of them were really discussed in this House. As a matter of fact, I find that 7 may be said to have been fairly discussed in this House. When I say fairly discussed, my interpretation and definition of the words fairly discussed is not exacting. I considered a Bill to be fairly discussed when there were two other Members speaking on it besides a Minister of the Crown. There were only 7 that came up to the limited requirement. There were 3 other Bills in respect of which one Member beside the Minister of the Crown spoke, and besides those 10 Bills there were 53 in regard to which there was no discussion in Committee whatever. Now, my Lords, it is impossible to say that adequate control and supervision have been exercised over these Bills. I do not think you can possibly take refuge in the happy view of my noble Friend that they were not examined because they did not require to be examined. If that is the case, surely revision of any Acts of Parliament at all would not be necessary. Now I turn to Private Bill business. Of course where there are all-important Private Bills there are many noble Lords who would take part in those, and the work of Standing Committees would be done by others of your Lordships. I should be sorry to have to confess that we cannot find in this House sufficient brains or sufficient assiduity to discharge both our public and private business, but if I am compelled to choose between the two, I must say, taking them all together, it seems to me a mere truism to assert that public Bills as a whole are more important than private Bills as a whole, and therefore I am unable to do otherwise than support a measure which has for its object to secure a more ample discussion of public Bills. There is only one other observation I wish to make, and that is to say that the question whether they shall or shall not subsequently be examined by a Committee of this House is a question of detail upon which we can decide afterwards. It is a question upon which there is a good deal to be said on both sides and upon which I confess I have a very strong opinion; but that is a matter which we can examine carefully afterwards. I only wish to refer to an observation made by noble Friend behind me—I may not yet name him, but who sits on the corner of the third Bench above the Gangway (Lord Beauchamp)—that these Committees on public Bills were a favourable opportunity for development of neophyte talent, that they were opportunities when bashful neophytes might come forward without a blush upon their countenances for fear that their utterances would be harshly judged. My Lords, it was a very touching argument, and I felt much moved by the consideration for this tender talent that we were said to be likely to crush; but in the course of the examination I made of the actual business of the House, I found that there was not one single man who took part in the discussions, that we did have who was not an old speaker or ordinary hack on one side or the other. I am afraid, therefore, that the neophyte argument must be abandoned.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL: My Lords, I think our object

should be not so much to supersede Committees of the whole House as to strengthen and improve them. What you ought to aim at should be rather development than substitution; in short, instead of taking away this scrutinizing process, you should elect another scrutinizing process. In that sense, the true Amendment ought to leave the Committees of the whole House undisturbed and intact, and to subject Bills further to the consideration of the Standing Committees which are contemplated. I desire to express my full concurrence in what has fallen from the noble Duke on the other side (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) and the noble Lords who have gone with him. I will add only one consideration in favour of not superseding Committees of the whole House. We must remember that we labour not so much under the pressure as under the scarcity of business. If you take away the Committees of the whole House, you are destroying so many opportunities of business in this Assembly, which we have not too often.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: As a Member of the Committee, I should like to say one word upon this very serious proposal. I am bound to confess that, in discussing this in the Committee room, I, for one, entertained a very serious doubt as to one particular part of this proposal. I admit, with my noble Friend behind me (Lord Colville of Culross), that there is a difficulty as to finding an adequate supply of Peers. I do not think my noble Friend's arguments have been wholly answered, if they have been touched, on that point, because when you come to consider the number of Peers who are necessarily incapacitated by age, by youth, by absence from the country on diplomatic appointments, on Colonial service, on military service, and other matters of the sort, and when you take the number which you necessarily would require for these Standing Committees, whether you adopt the maximum of 50, or whether you take a lower number, and then when you deduct from that such a list as that which hangs in the robing-room just outside where we are now discussing, it is perfectly clear that the available number for business will trench very largely upon the special class of ability to which you have hitherto looked for your Private Bill legislation, and the business of the House must accordingly suffer. But I do not regard this as the most important objection. The objection which weighed with me most, and still weighs greatly with me, is that which the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) urged so strongly—the question of the Committees of the whole House. I think there would be great difficulty on the point; and to send Bills before the Standing Committees must very seriously shut them out from that amount of discussion which they formerly got in Committee of the whole House, and to examination which was extremely valuable. But, on the other hand, after saying all we can, I am bound to confess that the advantage seems to me, with a very large number of the Bills, to be so great, of subjecting them to the care and minute examination upstairs which they cannot receive in this House, that on the whole I am disposed to vote for the substitution, to a certain extent, of the Standing Committees for the Committee of the whole House; but I would point out to my noble Friend that this clause especially provides for a re-committal of the Bills after they have been before the Standing Committees, and I would urge very strongly on my noble Friend at the head of the Government that we should not allow that re-committal to become a mere formal matter. If we can secure by the phraseology of the Standing Order that as a matter of fact without difficulty—I will not say as the invariable rule, because that would almost do away with the use of the Standing Committees—but if we can provide that whenever it is desired without involving any large pressure on the part of individual Peers, these Bills shall be re-committed again to the House, then all I can say is that I think you will have gained one valuable advantage, and I do not think the disadvantage connected with it would be very large. But I do venture to urge most earnestly upon the House and my noble Friend who has charge of this particular Question, that the re-committal to the House should not be a mere formal matter which can be invoked on special and great occasions, but that it shall be in the power of the House to agree to it whenever it desires.

*THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I am in favour of the policy of appoint-

ing Standing Committees, but I think the number proposed to form the Committee is too large. If you take four Standing Committees each consisting of 50 Peers, you take away from other business 200 noble Lords, practically exhausting the working power of the House, and I fail to see how you could get on with the Private Bill business with the small number of Peers you would have left. I think that part of the argument of the noble Lord opposite (Lord Colville of Culross) is quite answerable, but there is one simple remedy for that, and that is to reduce the number of Members in these Committees. I would suggest that that number of 50 should be reduced to 40.

THE EARL OF BELMORE: I think there is a great deal of force in what has fallen from the noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Herschell) about the advantage of Standing Committees; at the same time I think that there will be disadvantage in withdrawing Bills from Committees of the whole House. It may occasionally happen, as the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) pointed out, that a noble Lord, like himself, of great experience, may be engaged upon one private Bill for a very long period; but that does not happen very often. I have served in Committees of this House now for thirty years, and, according to my experience, the average length of time taken by each Bill is four or five days. I do not myself see why, because a Peer is appointed at the commencement of the Session upon one of these Standing Committees, he should necessarily absent himself from private Bill work.

*EARL CADOGAN: I quite agree with the suggestion made by my noble Friend that for the purpose of the discussion of the principle the first few lines of the proposed new Orders should be put to the House. I understand that the noble Duke in the Chair will put the words—

"At the commencement of each Session of Parliament Standing Committees shall be appointed."

Then afterwards, if the decision of your Lordships is in the affirmative, the details can be discussed.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: I hope your Lordships will not make the remedy too large for the evil. The only evil which I think has been made out is, that a certain number of Bills have escaped that vigorous criticism which they ought to have had. As regards the Session of 1887, which has been cited by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury), I do not know that any safe deduction is to be drawn from that illustration. The circumstances of the present Parliament, in another place, have been so exceptional, the number of measures sent up have been, comparatively speaking, few, the attention of that House being so completely taken up by matters more or less bearing upon the question of Ireland, that I think a very limited amount of legislation conld possibly have passed through the House, except upon the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government. Your Lordships know, of course, that Bills introduced by Her Majesty's Government, and supported by them, have all the advantages of Government drafting, and all the advantage of that supervision which they get from the various offices from which they emanate. Therefore, when you have, as in the Session of 1887, a large proportion of measures of that kind, as compared with the total measures of legislation, it is natural to suppose there will not be any very long or protracted discussions in Committee of this House. I am talking now of matters not of the first class. The noble Marquess also based his observations entirely on *Hansard*. Anybody who has followed *Hansard* knows perfectly well that our proceedings in Committee receive very scanty reports in that authority, and I do not think that because the names of one or two Peers only are reported as having taken part in the debates in the Committees, that it follows that the discussion was limited to them. Our Reports in Committee are very much condensed. What is really required, as far as I understand, is that there should be some Committee of Revision, and if that is so, I can quite understand that it would be advisable to appoint a Committee of Revision; but that is a very different thing from dividing the whole House (practically it comes to that)—the whole working power of the House—into Standing Committees. Then, again, I do not see what guarantee you can have, if your Standing Committees are framed at the beginning of the Session, that you would have upon that

Standing Committee to which a Bill may be referred the special knowledge which you may require for dealing with that particular subject. It would be a very great mistake if because there is some mischief to be remedied we make our remedy larger than the mischief really requires. If the object is the importation or establishment of some Committee of Revision let your Lordships confine yourselves to framing rules for some Committee for such revision, but do not let us take such a serious step as withdrawing from the cognisance of the House the Committee stage of the Bill; because it is all very well for noble Lords to say that when a Bill has once been refused to a Select Committee and comes back again to this House it can still be debated. It is almost impossible to obtain any reversal whatever of the decision of the Committee, or to obtain the attention of the House to any serious discussion. I hope nothing will be done to prevent all Bills passing through the Committee stage of this House, whatever Committees may be appointed to secure the revision of what has been done upstairs. What you want is a Committee of Revision, which it seems to me ought to be a much smaller Committee, a Committee of an entirely different kind to that which is shadowed out in these Resolutions.

VISCOUNT BURY: I quite see that the question before the House is how so to divide the working power of the House that we shall be able to give due attention to private Bill business as well as public business. I should like to ask my noble Friend (Earl Cadogan) whether it is intended when a Peer is appointed upon one of these Standing Committees that he should be appointed at the beginning of the Session, and that the Standing Committees should continue to sit during the whole Session; or are certain groups of Bills to be referred to Standing Committees from time to time as they come up here from the other House? I think that this would be a much less convenient and less economical way of occupying our time than the present system of discussing Bills in Committee of the whole House.

EARL CADOGAN: I am unable to answer the question of my noble Friend as to the exact number of sittings or the exact length of time the Committees would sit. I take it that the sittings of the Standing Committees would not be continuous in the sense that Private Bill Committees are. I may also observe that although the maximum number of members of each Committee is 50, the quorum is 12, so that it will not be like the Private Bill Committees, where every Member is supposed to sit.

Moved to agree to the proposed Standing Order No. 41A, as far as the word "appointed" in line 3: objected to; and, on question that those words stand part of the question, the House divided: —Contents, 52; Not-contents, 34.

Resolved accordingly.

LORD FITZ GERALD: My Lords, the Amendment I have to move is one which would very considerably affect the working of this proposal, the principle of which has just now been agreed upon. Your Lordships will notice that in this Standing Order No. 41A, it is proposed that every Bill, no matter whatever its character, no matter whether it be, or be not, a Government Bill, shall be committed unless the House shall otherwise order. Now there seems to me to be great objection to sending all Bills to Standing Committees. There are many Bills which ought not to be committed. The Amendment I propose is to omit the words, "unless the House shall otherwise order," with a view to insert the words "if the House shall so provide," in place of saying that all Bills shall go unless the House otherwise order. I propose that after a Bill has been read a second time, so that its principle is admitted by the House, the question shall then be put that it be referred to one of the Standing Committees. It has been said that this new Standing Order will assimilate our practice to that of the House of Commons, but, my Lords, it goes far beyond that. The practice in the House of Commons as to Standing Committees confines the Bills referred to them to those which affect the Courts of Justice, legal proceedings, and trade and commerce, and in addition the House pronounces its judgment upon the committal in each particular case.

EARL STANHOPE: My Lords, I can not see why, if we follow the procedure of the House of Commons in having Grand Committees, we should not also

follow the procedure in that House with respect to them. As I understand, the Grand Committees of the House of Commons are appointed at the beginning of the Session, but the Bills that go before them are brought up in Committee of the whole House, besides coming before the House on Report. I hope that it will not be the exception, but the rule, that all Bills that go before Standing Committees shall afterwards stand the light of their discussion in Committee of the whole House, so that any particular Bill may be considered not merely by learned Lords, but by lay Lords as well. I therefore support the Amendment of my noble and learned Friend.

LORD HERSCHELL: Personally, I should not be at all indisposed to Bills coming before the Committee of the whole House after they have been before the Standing Committees. I do not think any harm would result. My object is to secure a greater scrutiny of the Bills—it is not in any way to withdraw them from the scrutiny of the House. I believe in the case of nine-tenths of the Bills considered by Standing Committees of this House, the going into Committee of the whole House would be merely a matter of form. But, if that is done, I hope my noble and learned Friend will not press the first part of his Amendment. All Bills, as a general rule, would come before a Committtee of the whole House. I hope the proposed Standing Order will be altered so as to allow Bills that have been before the Standing Committee to come before the Committee of the whole House, but, at the same time, I think that objection would be met by leaving in the words "unless the House shall otherwise order," leaving the House to give directions in particular cases.

EARL CADOGAN: I join with the noble and learned Lord opposite in hoping that the first part of my noble and learned Friend's Amendment will not be pressed. I understand the noble and learned Lord to say that there are certain Bills which it would not be advisable to refer to Standing Committees, and I think he instanced Government Bills. I am not able quite to agree with that. I think it will be found that there have been many mistakes made even in Government Bills, and that they are not at all so well framed that it would be inadvisable to refer them to Standing Committees. As to the desirability of providing for the commitment of all Bills that have been before Grand Committees, I think the objection could be met by the omission of the word "not" in the last line but one of this paragraph, making the provision read—

"On the Report of the Standing Committee being received, the Bill shall be re-committed, unless the House so order."

LORD FITZ GERALD: I am afraid I must press my Amendment. My desire is that the House should pronounce its judgment upon each Bill—I mean that there should be a distinct Resolution of the House before any one Bill is referred to one of the Standing Committees. As the Order is now proposed all Bills will go, unless the House otherwise order. The point of my Amendment is that no Bill shall go unless the House shall affirmatively order. I can instance many cases in which it would be exceedingly inconvenient to commit Bills to Standing Committees without any Order of the House. I want the House to exercise its independent judgment in every case upon the question: Shall this Bill be committed to one of the Standing Committees? In the majority of cases the House would probably say "Yes," but there are other cases in which it would be considered unwise to make such committal.

LORD HERSCHELL: My noble Friend has said that in the majority of cases the House would probably make

the committal. If so, it seems to me that that shows that that ought to be the rule, and the other the exception.

On the question that the words "unless the House shall otherwise order" stand part of the question, the House divided:—Contents 36; Not Contents 36.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: According to custom the decision will be that the Not Contents have it.

The words were, therefore, struck out.

LORD FITZ GERALD: Now, I propose to insert, at line 6, the words "if the House shall so order."

LORD HERSCHELL: I am not sure that I ought to give my noble and learned Friend any assistance, but if it is put in that way without omitting the words "instead of to a Committee of the whole House," it will effect the reversal of the decision that has just been given, and will not assist my noble Friend's object.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I venture to suggest that instead of adding the words "if the House shall so order," it should read "as the House shall order." That will indicate that a Motion must be made in each particular case.

LORD FITZ GERALD: I will accept that Amendment.

Question, to insert the words "as the House shall order," agreed to.

Question, to omit the word "not" in line 7, agreed to.

Question, "that the words 'shall otherwise order' be inserted in lieu of the words 'so order'," agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: The next paragraph of this Order is—

"The Standing Committees shall not exceed four in number, and shall be appointed for such classes of Bills as the House may determine."

*EARL STANHOPE: To meet the difficulty which would undoubtedly be found to arise if 200 Members of this House were serving on these Committees, besides those on the Private Bill and Select Committees; I move as an Amendment to substitute the word "three" for the word "four."

*EARL CADOGAN: I venture to suggest that if in the opinion of the House the numbers required for these Committees are too large, it would be better to limit the number of Members of each Committee than to reduce the number of Committees. The subjects into which the Bills should be divided are so various that it is desirable to have four separate Committees, although the number of Peers serving might be reduced.

*EARL BEAUCHAMP: Why should we say four or three? I suggest that we strike out the words "not exceed four in number, and." which will leave the number of the Standing Committees to be determined by the House.

*EARL STANHOPE: Why does my noble Friend use the phrase "classes of Bills" in this paragraph?

*EARL CADOGAN: I do not attach any importance to the word "classes," but in the House of Commons the Grand Committees are divided into two classes.

The Amendment was withdrawn.

Question: "That these paragraphs—

'At the commencement of each Session of Parliament Standing Committees shall be appointed, to one or other of which every Bill shall be committed, instead of to a Committee of the whole House, as the House shall order; and, on the Report of the Standing Committee being received, the Bill shall be re-committed, unless the House shall otherwise order,'

'The Standing Committees shall not exceed four in number, and shall be appointed for such classes of Bills as the House may determine,'

be added to the Standing Orders," agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: The next Standing Order that I have to propose is:—

"At the commencement of each Session, a Committee of Selection, consisting of the Chairman of Committees and eight other Lords to be named by the House, shall be

appointed, whose duty it shall be to nominate the Lords to serve on the Standing Committees."

Question, "That this paragraph be added to the Standing Orders," agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: The next Order is:—

"Each of the Standing Committees shall consist of not more than 50 nor less than 20 Lords, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, who shall have power to discharge Lords with their assent from time to time, and to appoint others in substitution for those discharged. The Committee of Selection shall have power to add not more than 10 Lords to a Standing Committee, in respect of any Bill committed to a Standing Committee, to serve on the committee during the consideration of such

*THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I would like to raise the question of the numbers of which these Standing Committees should consist. I proposed in the Committee last September that the number should be forty instead of fifty. I am bound to say that I did not obtain much support, but my opinion is unchanged, and my contention is that the work will be better done by a smaller Committee. Though it may seem a paradox, I believe that the smaller number will produce the larger attendance, for, if the number is large, there will be temptation to some Peers to think that their attendance can be dispensed with, whereas, if the Committee is a small one, each Member feels bound to take part in the work. I move to-night the word "forty" in place of the word "fifty."

LORD HERSCHELL: I may say that I opposed the proposal of my noble Friend when it was made before the Select Committee, but after the discussion we have had to-night, I see no objection to reducing the membership.

EARL CADOGAN: I also voted against the proposal of the noble Earl, but I must confess that I am swayed by the arguments that we have heard, and I am quite prepared to accept the reduction suggested.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: There is one question I should like to ask—Where would these Committees sit? This Chamber is used in the daytime by the noble and learned Lords, and I know of no Committee room in which anything like 50 Members could sit in anything like comfort. Considerable structural alterations would have to be undertaken to make some place for these Committees to sit in.

The Amendment of the Earl of Derby was agreed to.

Question, "That the paragraph, as amended, be added to the Standing Orders," agreed to.

EARL CADOGAN: The next Order which I have to move is numbered 41D.:

"The Quorum of a Standing Committee shall be Twelve."

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN: Does it not rather suggest itself that, having reduced the number of the Committee, we should reduce the quorum?

EARL CADOGAN: In fixing 12 we really considered what was an adequate attendance of Members, rather than the proportion which the figure bore to the total Membership.

Question, "That this paragraph be added to the Standing Orders," agreed to.

The following additions to the Standing Orders were separately put, and agreed to:—

"It shall be competent for any Standing Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee for the fuller consideration of any Bill committed to them."

"The Committee of Selection shall nominate not more than 12, nor less than 8, Lords to serve as Chairmen, who shall appoint from among themselves the Chairman of each Standing Committee, and may change the Chairman appointed from time to time. No such appointment shall be made at a meeting of less than three."

"The procedure of a Standing Committee shall be the same as in a Select Committee, unless the House shall otherwise order."

"A Bill which passed through Committee of the whole House, may, upon motion made, be re-committed to one of the Standing Committees."

EARL CADOGAN: Next I have to move an amendment in Standing Order XLII., which deals with Select Committees. We propose to omit the words—

"They [Judges or Counsel attending] are not to sit there or be covered, unless it be out of favour for infirmity; some Judge sometimes hath a stool set behind, but never covers; and the rest never sit on cover,'

And to substitute the words—

"And no man, except the Lords, shall be covered in the room in which the Select Committee is sitting."

Alteration agreed to.

LORD FITZ GERALD: I have an Amendment to move in Standing Order LXII., which now reads as follows—

"The nobility of this kingdom, and Lords of the Upper House of Parliament, whether they be plaintiffs or defendants, are of ancient right to answer or be examined in all Courts upon protestation of honour only, and not upon the common oath."

I propose to omit the words "or be examined." My Lords, I have traced the history of this Standing Order. I find that in the year 1612 a noble Lord had been ordered by the Court of Star Chamber to answer upon oath, and a Committee sat to consider the matter. In their Report, which was brought up by the Earl Marshal, the Committee stated that they had examined the precedents, and after consideration they agreed that the nobility of the Kingdom and Members of this House had an ancient right to answer as defenders upon protestation of honour only. The Standing Order professed to be made on this Report, but went beyond it. This practice of the old Court of Chancery was to receive the Answer of a Peer on protestation of honour; but the evidence given orally, or in reply to interrogatories, was always given upon oath. Now, however, the practice in the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice is that there is no sworn Answer, and instead of an Answer the defendant has to put in a Statement of Defence; and, no matter whom the defendant may be, this statement is not made upon oath. The privilege was in the old days undoubtedly confined to Answers in Chancery, and if a Peer came as a witness on his own behalf, or as a witness *inter partes*, or in a criminal case, he was examined on oath.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I do not think, my Lords, that we should be justified in making a change in that which is traditional and customary law, dating, as the noble and learned Lord has shown, from very early times, without taking the precaution of examining, by means of a Committee, how far the privilege is inconsistent with the present state of the law. I do not think it would be for the convenience of the House, at this time of the evening, and considering how few Peers are present, to discuss a matter of so great importance.

LORD FITZ GERALD: I should be desirous in all respects to consult the convenience of the House; but to pass this Standing Order, in its present form, seems to me to be asserting a privilege which does not exist, and is contrary to law. If it is more convenient to the House that this matter should be discussed on the Report, I will withdraw the Amendment; but I confidently appeal to the noble and learned Lord who sits on the Woolsack that I have not misstated the law.

LORD HERSCHELL: I strongly object to any Amendment of these archaic and historical Orders, unless the whole matter is very fully gone into. It would be better not to touch them at all rather than give them fresh sanction without the most careful study.

EARL CADOGAN: I may remind the noble and learned Lord (Lord Fitz Gerald) that we are now in Committee "to consider the Report of the Select Committee on the Standing Orders relating to the conduct of Public Business," and we should confine ourselves to the Report of the Committee. I may mention that the Committee during its

deliberations distinctly confined itself to those Orders which related to public business.

Amendment withdrawn.

*EARL CADOGAN: Then, my Lords, on page 43 I propose the omission of the words providing that the Order concerning the precedency of the Earl of Banbury shall be read at the beginning of every Session; and also consequential words on page 45.

The Amendments were agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: On page 50, your Lordships will see that we strike out Standing Order No. LXXXVIII., which relates to Messages between this House and the House of Commons; and we propose to make the Order read thus—

"One of the Clerks of either House may be the bearer of messages from the one to the other;

Messages so sent may be received at the Bar by one of the Clerks of the House to which they are sent, at any time whilst it is sitting or in Committee, without interrupting the business then proceeding."

The alteration was agreed to.

*EARL CADOGAN: Then, as to Conferences with the other House, we propose to amend the Standing Order so as to allow of the meetings taking place in the Painted Chamber,

"Or other room appointed in lieu thereof;"

and to expunge the words directing the Commons to be uncovered.

Amendment agreed to.

House resumed.

Report of the Amendments to the Standing Orders to be received on Friday next; the amended Standing Orders to be printed.

ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL BILL.
(No. 12.)

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read, and discharged.

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 15th March, 1889.

QUESTIONS.

THE ORDERS OF THE DAY—POINT OF ORDER.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask you, Sir, as a point of order, if there are any official means of accounting for the fact that two Notices of Motion in the name of the First Lord of the Treasury, one suspending the Standing Order as to time and the other shutting out Notices of Motion on Friday appear in the *Times* newspaper this morning and do not appear in the Orders of the Day?

*MR. SPEAKER: I cannot give any account of it. I saw them in the journal to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, but I did not see them on the paper.

MR. SEXTON: Thank you, Sir; I shall recur to the matter at the close of the questions.

POSTAL CHARGES.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General whether he was aware that making ample allowance for the difference in exchange, the merchant in Austria can post 120 letters for £1 to England, whereas the merchant in England can only post 96 letters to Austria for the same money; and, whether he could state, since these countries are in the Postal Union, when the next Postal Union Conference will be held?

*THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES, University of Cambridge): I am quite aware of the fact brought to my notice by the hon. Member. The explanation is that, according to the Postal Union Convention, 25 centimes is fixed as the initial rate of postage; but, as only a few countries use the decimal currency, each State of the Union collects its postage in its own currency, avoiding fractions in calculating the equivalent to 25 centimes. In Austria 10 kreutzer is the equivalent adopted; and in this country 2½d. is the nearest equivalent. I do not see the logical

connection of the hon. Member's second question, and I cannot say when the next Postal Union Congress will be held. No precise date has yet been fixed.

IRISH EVICTIONS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if he could state the exact number of actual evictions from agricultural holdings in Ireland during the year 1888 at the suit of the landlord; and how many of the number took place on estates under the Plan of Campaign?

*THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. MADDEN, University of Dublin): The number of actual evictions of the class referred to in the first paragraph was 655 tenants and 118 sub-tenants. Of these, 129 tenants and 14 sub-tenants were evicted on estates under the Plan of Campaign.

MR. SEXTON: How many tenants have been deprived of the legal estate in their holdings by means of eviction notices?

*MR. MADDEN: I have not the figures at hand.

THE VOLUNTEERS.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked whether, if, during the temporary absence on leave of the officer commanding a brigade of Volunteers, the charge of the Brigade devolves on the next senior officer of the brigade?

*SIR H. E. MAXWELL (Wigton), on behalf of Mr. E. STANHOPE, said: If a Volunteer brigade should be assembled in a brigade camp and the brigadier should be absent, the senior Volunteer commanding officer present would assume command; but on other occasions there would be no necessity to replace the brigadier during his temporary absence.

MR. J. E. BLAKENEY.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether Mr. J. E. Blakeney was still a magistrate for the county of Cork; whether Mr. Blakeney's sole qualification for being appointed a magistrate for the County of Cork was the fact of having been appointed agent on the Ponsonby Estate; whether it is a fact that Mr. Blakeney owns no property, and never even rented a house within the county of Cork; whether he has long since been dismissed from the agency, and left the district and county of Cork; and, whether, under these circumstances, it is the intention of the Lord Chancellor to continue him in the Commission of the Peace for the county of Cork?

*MR. MADDEN: I understand that the gentleman referred to is no longer a Magistrate for the County Cork, as upon resigning the agency of the Ponsonby Estate he likewise resigned the Commission of the Peace, his connection with the county having ceased.

ROMAN CATHOLIC MAGISTRATES IN YOUGHAL.

MR. LANE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether there is any Roman Catholic Justice of the Peace resident in the Petty Sessions district of Youghal; and, if not, whether he will take steps to remedy such a state of affairs in a district chiefly inhabited by Roman Catholics?

MR. MADDEN: I am informed that there does not appear to be any Roman Catholic Magistrate in the Youghal Petty Sessions district. The Lord Chancellor of Ireland is ready to consider the names of any properly qualified Roman Catholics that may be submitted to him by the Lieutenant of the County, who is always glad to be in a position to submit such names.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Will the hon. and learned Gentleman say whether the boycotting of Protestants in Youghal has ceased?

MR. LANE: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman say by what means the people of the locality can bring the name of suitable Roman Catholics under the notice of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, seeing that the Lord Lieutenant of the County is the Master of an Orange Lodge, and would certainly not recommend a Roman Catholic for the Commission of the Peace?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

DOUBLE INQUESTS.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report in the *Star* of the 4th instant, of

the double inquest in Whitechapel, from which it appears that Louisa Ellesden died suddenly in Spitalfields; that an inquest was held in that locality by the Coroner for North East Middlesex; and that, when the body was subsequently removed to the Whitechapel mortuary, which serves the entire district, Mr. Baxter, Coroner for the South East Division, held a second inquest; and whether he will take steps to prevent the unnecessary repetition of inquests, entailing inconvenience to the relatives of the deceased, and additional cost to the ratepayers in Whitechapel?

MR. MATTHEWS: (1) The facts are correctly stated. (2) Mr. Baxter has written me a letter, in which he contends that the Statute of 1887 left him no option but to hold a second inquest. I cannot admit the soundness of this contention, and I consider that holding a second inquest was improper. If such a case occurs again, I shall consider it my duty to represent the matter to the Lord Chancellor, in order to prevent the occurrence of any such clashing of jurisdiction.

LORD LURGAN'S AGENT.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland if at Lurgan (county Armagh) Petty Sessions, held on the 5th instant, James McAleese brought an ejectment against a cottier tenant named Sarah Poland, of Derrytagh North, on Lord Lurgan's estate, and decree granted; if Mr. James Fford obtained an ejectment against a cottier tenant named Cairns, of Derryadd, and decree granted; if same farmer obtained a decree of ejectment against a cottier tenant named James Scullion, of Derryadd, both on Lord Lurgan's estate; if Mr. C. Brownlow, agent for Lord Lurgan, adjudicated in the cases; if the cottier tenants mentioned will lose the benefits of the 4th section of the Land Purchase Act of 1887; and if he will communicate with the Irish Land Commission, with reference to those ejectments, when arranging the proposed sale of Lord Lurgan's estate?

*MR. MADDEN said, that the tenants referred to all held under weekly agreements, but none of them were on the estate of Lord Lurgan. Mr. Brownlow was one of eight magistrates who adjudicated on the occasion; but as he had no connection with the estates involved, there was no reason why he should not do so.

MR. BLANE: Is the same gentleman the estate agent of Lord Lurgan?

*MR. MADDEN: He had no connection with the estates on which the evictions took place. The hon. Member has been misinformed.

LETTERS TO ZANZIBAR.

MR. JOHN TALBOT (University of Oxford) asked the Postmaster General whether there is any reason for a charge of 5d. per half-ounce being imposed upon letters from England to Zanzibar, whilst letters from Zanzibar to England are only charged half that rate; and whether the inequality can be redressed?

*MR. RAIKES: Letters posted at the Indian Postal Agency at Zanzibar are charged 4½ annas per half-ounce, which is about the equivalent of the 5d. charged in this country on letters sent to Zanzibar. The French Post Office has recently set up an agency at Zanzibar, and I believe that, in accordance with French practice in other parts of the world, the initial Postal Union rate of 25 centimes the 15 grammes (about 2½d. the half-ounce) is accepted in prepayment of postage on such letters as may be posted at the French Agency. So far as the mails are conveyed by British packet, the French Post Office incurs no loss, as the postage more than covers the payment made by them to us for sea conveyance under the Postal Union regulations. As to the French mail lines, they are maintained more for political than for postal purposes, and the loss on the mails is apparently disregarded.

ARREARS OF RENT.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kerry, S.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the Land Sessions, held at Listowel, county Kerry, on the 7th inst., the Commissioners reduced an aggregate rental (Messrs. Browne and Mulling landlords) of £403 3s. 2d. to £244 5s. 0d.; whether it is a fact that the presentment for the maintenance of extra police at the March Assizes in Kerry was £5,825; whether this cost for extra police is due to the fact that the landlords in many instances proceed for the recovery of the arrears of the rack rent

after the judicial rent has been fixed; and, whether, in cases similar to the above, he will refuse the forces of the Crown for the recovery of arrears of rent which a legal tribunal has declared to be 65 per cent in excess of a fair rent?

*MR. MADDEN: I believe the facts are as stated in the question.

MR. KILBRIDE: If the hon. and learned Gentleman finds that the rent has been declared by a legal tribunal to be 65 per cent above a fair rent, will the forces of the Crown be lent to assist in its recovery?

*MR. MADDEN: I cannot answer such a question.

SEA BOARD COUNTY COUNCILS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he could forward a Circular to the Sea Board County Councils, directing their attention to the first section of the Sea Fisheries Act, having reference to the formation of fishing districts, for the purpose of prohibiting the discharge of any substance detrimental to sea-fishing?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): The Board of Trade are about to issue the Rules which they have drawn up for the guidance of those applying to them for Fishery Orders. These Rules will be published very widely, and will be accompanied by a circular calling attention, amongst other matters, to the point referred to by the hon. Member.

LOCH GOIL AND LOCH LONG.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the pollution of the waters of Loch Long and Loch Goil, by the deposit of dredgings by the Clyde Trust, is still persistently continued, such deposits amounting to many thousand tons per month; whether these deposits were first made with the consent of the Admiralty, under the view of the right of the Crown to the soil of these inland seas; whether, since the scientific Report on the pollution of these lochs, made in 1887, the Admiralty consent has been withdrawn; and whether the Government will take steps on behalf of the public to abate the nuisance now continuing in waters legally under Crown control?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON, Buteshire): I regret to find that the Clyde Trustees continue the deposit of dredgings in Loch Long, without any diminution of the amount. The consent of the Admiralty, which was given in 1862 to the deposit of certain dredgings, expired long ago, and did not apply to the present operations. The present deposits are entirely without the sanction of any Department of Government. While the action of this body of Statutory Trustees is open to grave observation, the persons with whom the remedy primarily lies are those who are directly injured. I pointed out in February last to a deputation of proprietors and inhabitants of the district that if a nuisance has been created they have their action at Common Law, that it would be difficult to justify the institution of legal proceedings at the cost of taxpayers in the interests of a comparatively small number of persons affected by a local nuisance, where there is no active injury to Crown property. I by no means imply, however, that the Government renounce their intention, if need be, to take measures for stopping what cannot be regarded as a proper exercise of statutory powers.

BUSBYHEAD PIT.

MR. CUNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanarkshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the inspector obtained his information anent the dispute at Busbyhead Pit from the workmen or the manager; and whether he will cause an inquiry to be made by some independent party into the facts of the case, since the men allege that they have documentary and oral evidence to prove the inspector's statement to be untrue?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed by the inspector that he obtained his information from the manager, as none of the miners were at the pit at the time when he made his visit. I consider the inspector to be an independent party, and I have requested him to make full inquiry from the men, and to report further to me on the matter.

MINING ROYALTIES.

MR. PRITCHARD MORGAN (Merthyr Tydvil) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he would state, or if

he would consent to a Return, showing what amounts have been paid to the Treasury annually, by way of royalties for minerals raised on the Crown lands of Wales, from the year 1860 up to the present time, and for what metals and minerals have such royalties been paid; what amounts have been received by the Treasury as royalty from "mines royal" on freehold lands during the same period, and what amount for gold and what for silver; what has been the approximate cost per annum of administering this department of the public service, and of collecting these royalties; and whether the Government intends in future to charge any royalty upon gold and silver obtained from mines royal on freehold property when such gold and silver is not being obtained at a profit to the adventurers?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I cannot state the particulars asked for in the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question without a Return; and a Return distinguishing the royalties received for each mineral for 28 years would be a long and costly business. As the total amount derived from these royalties has been less than £8,000 a year on the average for the last eight years, I do not think I should be justified in authorizing the expenditure of time and money necessary to obtain such a Return. As to royalties received by the Treasury from "mines Royal" on freehold lands during the same period, they were quite insignificant till the present financial year, when they amounted to £832. The cost of administering the Crown mineral property in Wales cannot be separately stated. The cost of collection and local supervision somewhat exceeds 8 per cent. The Commissioners of Woods and Forests will be willing to consider the claim of adventurers working "mines Royal" without profit to be exempt from royalties; but it must depend upon the circumstances of each case. I think the hon. Member can call to mind the case of a mine being sold to a company for, in shares and cash, £190,000, not so long ago. If the company in question were, in consequence of paying such a price, to make no profit, I should not consider that a reason for remitting the royalty due to the Crown. Until a few years ago, the Crown would have received one-fourth of the profits of the sale in question, and I am sorry that the Exchequer does not get such a share now.

CRIMINAL CHARGES.

MR. A. L. BROWN (Hawick) asked the Lord Advocate whether it was the case that, on the 24th day of October last, Peter Robertson, gamekeeper, Galashiels, was convicted by the Sheriff Substitute, at Selkirk, of an assault upon one James Brown, a convicted poacher, against whom he had himself lodged a charge of assault with the district constable; whether the Chief Constable of Selkirkshire, to whom the district constable had communicated the charge, did not transmit the same to the Procurator Fiscal of the county, who was thereby kept in ignorance of material facts; whether he will state whether the police are required to forward to the Public Prosecutor all essential information bearing upon a criminal charge undergoing investigation; and, if so, why the Chief Constable failed in his duty in this case; and whether he has declined to give Mr. Robertson's solicitor the information now asked for?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: The statements of fact in the first part of the question are correct. The Procurator Fiscal was informed of the counter charge by the Chief Constable; and, on the information given, the Procurator Fiscal made inquiries and considered that there was no ground for such a charge. It is certainly the duty of the police to supply all essential information, and I am not aware that he failed in his duty in this case. The Secretary for Scotland has not declined to give the information now asked for. Robertson's solicitor, in reply to a request to know what the information was that influenced his decision not to interfere, was informed by the Secretary for Scotland that his judgment was formed on consideration of the case as submitted by the Solicitor himself, and after due inquiry.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty if, with reference to the recent investments of the sums of

£130,000 and £200,000 on mortgage of freehold estates from Greenwich Hospital Funds, referred to by the Comptroller and Auditor General in his Report on the Capital and Income Accounts of Greenwich Hospital for the year ending 31st March, 1888, he will state what is the rate of interest to be paid on these mortgages, and what margin of security the Admiralty consider necessary in investments of this kind?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, Sheffield, Ecclesall), who replied, said: The rate of interest to be paid on each of these mortgages is 3¾ per cent per annum, and the margin of security is over 300 per cent in the first case and over 200 per cent in the second. The margin of security considered necessary in investments of this kind is about 200 per cent.

FACTORY INSPECTION.

MR. RICHARD POWER (Waterford) asked the Home Secretary how often the Inspector of Factories had visited Waterford within the last three years; and, if he has made any Report as to the condition of the working classes in that town?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Inspector of the district has visited the factories and workshops in Waterford seven times in the last three years. No special Report has been made on the condition of the working classes there.

KING LO BENGULA.

MR. ALEXANDER M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Envoys from King Lo Bengula, now in London, are charged with any special mission; and whether the Government will avail themselves of this opportunity afforded by the presence of the deputation in London to impress upon the King their views with regard to the concessions recently made by him to Mr. Rudd and others?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Baron H. DE WORMS, Liverpool, Toxteth): Lo Bengula's Envoys say that they were sent in order that they might report to him about the Queen and her country, and request her protection against foreign invasions and aggressions; Lo Bengula has also asked for advice about the white men who came into his country to dig for gold, and he will be recommended not to grant concessions without careful consideration and advice, and not to give to any individuals a monopoly of enterprize in his country.

SCOTCH LEGAL PROCEDURE.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the case of Alexander Murray, of Tarbert, Harris, tried at Lochmaddy on Friday last on a charge of reset and discharged; whether it is true, as stated in the Scottish newspapers, that Murray, having been apprehended at Tarbert, was brought to Lochmaddy, committed to prison, liberated on bail, and had again to travel from Tarbert to Lochmaddy to tender a formal plea of not guilty; that he was then cited to take his trial before the sheriff and jury at Inverness, and on arriving there found that, without any notice, the Procurator Fiscal had deserted the diet; that after returning to Tarbert he was again cited for summary trial at Lochmaddy; and that he had in all to travel about 400 miles at his own expense to meet the charge against him, which finally broke down; and whether he will recommend the Treasury to recoup Murray for the needless expense to which he was subjected by the abandonment without notice of the diet against him at Inverness?

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: My attention has been called to this case. The facts as to the preliminary proceedings at Lochmaddy are accurately stated. Lochmaddy is the Court nearest to Tarbert, the distance those places being 3 hours, sailing, and the fare 1s. 6d. The trial at Inverness was countermanded, as it was considered that, the principal delinquent having been already convicted on his own plea, Murray might be tried summarily at Lochmaddy so as to avoid expense. Notice was duly sent for Murray's information, but it was found that he had already left home for Inverness two days sooner than was necessary. The inconveniences suffered are, to a large extent, inseparable from the geographical conditions of the country; and for the long journey to Inverness the accused was himself

responsible. As I stated to the hon. Gentleman yesterday I shall see whether any modification of the arrangement of pleading diets can be made, so as to mitigate the difficulties of the district.

SHANNON DRAINAGE BILL.

MR. PATRICK JOSEPH O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he has received from the Shannon or Limerick Board of Conservators, more than three months ago, a Petition in reference to the proposed Shannon Drainage Bill, and the serious injury that would accrue to the valuable salmon, trout, and eel fisheries of the river in the event of said Bill being passed; whether the only reply the Board of Conservators have received was a printed acknowledgment of the Petition; and whether, having regard to the great importance of the subject, he will cause a satisfactory and speedy answer to be returned to the body referred to?

*MR. MADDEN said, that the Memorial in question had been received, and was duly acknowledged. The prayer of the Memorial was that the Bill, before it became law, might be referred to a Select Committee. This would be the natural course after the Bill had passed a Second Reading, and the Memorialists would be so informed.

BURGLARS AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received the following presentment lately made by the Grand Jury of Hampshire, with the approval of Mr. Justice Hawkins—

"That, owing to the increase of the crime of burglary, we would suggest that when burglars are found in possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons, the law should provide that such persons should be liable to corporal punishment, and that this punishment should also be inflicted on persons convicted of brutal violence towards women and children;"

and, if the Government will take any steps to carry out this presentment of the Grand Jury?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes, Sir; I have received such a presentment. The infliction of corporal punishment is contrary to the spirit of recent legislation, and the Government would not propose to revert to this system of punishment unless there were strong grounds for supposing that the present law is not sufficiently deterrent in the case of the crimes referred to. There may, however, be cases where the violence is exceptionally brutal, and where the evidence of identity is beyond question. In such cases the application of corporal punishment might have a useful effect. I will consult the Lord Chancellor whether any amendment of the existing law is desirable or necessary.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND COUNTY COUNCILS.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board whether gentlemen in Government employ, and in receipt of salaries from the State, are eligible for County Councillors or Aldermen?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE, Tower Hamlets, St. George's-in-the-East): The fact that a person is in Government employ, and in receipt of salary from the State, does not render him legally ineligible for the office of County Councillor or County Alderman. With regard to the view of the Government on the question whether members of the Civil Service should be permitted to become candidates for County Councillors, I can only refer the hon. Member to the reply which was given by the First Lord of the Treasury to a question on this subject on the 6th of December last.

THE COASTGUARD.

MR. BOND (Dorset, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Coastguard will participate in the proposed increase of pay to the signalmen of the Royal Navy whilst serving afloat for anuual exercise?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): Not under existing regulations, but a proposal has been put forward, and is now under the consideration of the Board, to give the Coastguard signalmen, when embarked, an increase of pay.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) asked the President of the

Local Government Board, whether, having regard to the state of the law, which permits clergymen and ministers of religion to become members of county but not of municipal councils, he will deal with this question in the Local Government Bill of this Session, or give facilities for the passing of a short Bill removing the anomaly?

*MR. RITCHIE: It is not proposed by the Government to introduce a Bill this Session altering the law as regards existing disqualifications for the office of Town Councillor, and I cannot undertake that, if any such Bill should be introduced by a private Member, facilities would be given for the consideration of the measure in preference to that of other Bills.

PROTECTION OF RAILWAY SERVANTS.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Circular Letter of the 19th December last as to the regulations for the protection of platelayers and fogmen, and the replies of the railway companies to that Circular Letter, and any other communication from the railway companies since the issue of the Circular, stating what they propose to do by way of amending their regulations, as suggested in Major Marindin's Report on the Syston accident, or otherwise to prevent risk?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol): I think I shall probably be able to lay some papers on this subject on the Table when the correspondence is complete.

THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that counsel for the *Times* have not produced before the Special Commission certain prisoners who allege that temptations have been held out to them by Mr. Andrews, Governor of Downpatrick Prison, policemen, and other persons acting for the *Times*, to induce them to concoct evidence against Members of this House and others, he will now consent to afford some means for inquiring into the truth of those allegations, seriously affecting the honour of the Government on the one part, and those charged before the Special Commission on the other part—namely, by a public investigation on oath?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I imagine the means for inquiring into the truth of the allegations which the hon. Member desires is already provided by the Special Commission, before whom it is in the power of any of the defendants to call M'Nulty and Mullet and examine them upon oath.

MR. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Commissioners have decided that their function is simply to inquire into certain charges and allegations made against Members of Parliament and others in the case of "O'Donnell *v.* Walter"; whether they have declared that it is not in their power to extend the scope of their inquiry; and whether it is in the power of the House to ascertain whether officials in the service of the Government have been employed to suborn perjury?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe it is in the power of the Commissioners to call any of these persons before them.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has seen in the report of the proceedings before the Royal Commission on Tuesday last that Timothy Coffey, a witness for the *Times*, swore that a member of the Irish Constabulary asked him to make certain statements before the Royal Commission, and assured him that he would be remunerated if he gave valuable information, and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the truth of these allegations; whether the solicitor of those who are charged by the *Times* before the Commission will be allowed access to all official information in regard to the charges made against his clients which, as stated by the *Times* on Thursday, was placed at the disposal of the solicitor of that journal, and whether, as in the case of the *Times*, Mr. Anderson will place at his disposal any reports that he has received in regard to the actions of Mr. Lewis's clients; and whether the names of the police constables and the magistrates who furnish the *Times* with tabulated information will be given on application to Mr. Lewis in order that he may apply for all or any of that tabulated informa-

tion that he may deem it in the interests of his clients to possess?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the proceedings; but I understand that the witness referred to is the one whom the Commission committed for contempt on the ground that, by his own showing, he was utterly untrustworthy. I have more than once stated in the House the desire of the Government to furnish all legitimate information either to the Commission or to parties charged before the Commission, and I have further stated that the proper method of obtaining such information is the ordinary one of writing a letter to the Irish Government, asking for the information which is required. Any application of that kind from Messrs. Lewis will be dealt with without unnecessary delay.

MR. SEXTON: Will the Government place in the hands of our solicitors all the information at present placed at the disposal of the *Times*?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall wait until the application is made before I answer it.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, as the case of the *Times* before the Special Commission has closed without Mr. Robert Anderson having been called as a witness. he will now answer the questions which were put to him by the hon. Member for the Rugby Division on March 5th?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am informed that Mr. Anderson did hand to a witness named Le Caron, certain letters which had been written by Le Caron himself confidentially to Mr. Anderson under a pledge that they should be given to no one but Le Caron himself. Mr. Anderson did give Le Caron a letter of introduction to Mr. Houston, after having unsuccessfully advised him not to come forward as a witness. Mr. Anderson culled out from letters he had received from Le Caron those which related to private matters, and were not necessary for the purpose of giving evidence. Mr. Anderson is not aware whether the documents remained in Mr. Houston's custody. I have not been able, from such reports as I have seen, to verify the whole of the hon. Member's account of Le Caron's evidence, but I must decline to ascertain or to express any opinion whether Le Caron's evidence is true. That is a matter for the Special Commission to determine. Although Mr. Anderson acted without my knowledge or sanction, I think he acted properly in handing to Le Caron documents which had come from Le Caron, and which were necessary to enable him to give full evidence on any matter that the Commission deemed material.

SIR W. HARCOURT: May I ask why Mr. Anderson was not called before the Commission to explain his conduct, according to the pledge given in the House by the Home Secretary?

MR. MATTHEWS: I gave no pledge on the subject. I stated what Mr. Anderson informed me—that he had been summoned—but I cannot give an explanation why the counsel representing the *Times* has not called upon him. It is probable that Mr. Anderson will still be called at a later stage.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Did those papers of Major Le Caron belong to Mr. Anderson or to the Government?

MR. COBB: Did Mr. Anderson tell Major Le Caron, "that Mr. Houston was a gentleman upon whom he could rely implicitly, and that Houston had been selected as representing the interests of the prosecution?"

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not aware. I have given all the information in my power. I apprehend that the documents belonged to Le Caron.

MR. SEXTON: Was Mr. Anderson authorized to hand over to Le Caron documents necessary for his evidence in Court, and what has become of the portions of the documents handed over to Houston which were not used by Le Caron in Court?

MR. MATTHEWS: I informed the hon. Member that Mr. Anderson acted without my knowledge and without my sanction. If he wishes for further information he must put a question on the Paper.

MR. SEXTON: The right hon. Gentleman said that he approved Mr. Anderson's action in handing the papers to Le Caron. Does he also approve of allowing those papers to be further committed to Houston, and what has become of the portion of the papers handed over to him which were not used by Le Caron in Court?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have stated that I thought that Mr. Anderson acted

rightly in giving to Le Caron documents which had emanated from him and which were legitimate ones for him to refer to in order to give fuller and more accurate information to the Commission. To that expression of opinion I adhere. The hon. Gentleman asks about certain other documents, and of those I know nothing.

MR. SEXTON: Was Le Caron authorized—[*Ministerial cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—perhaps you would like the adjournment of the House? Was Le Caron authorized by Mr. Anderson to hand to Houston documents given to Le Caron because they were necessary to his evidence; and what has Houston done with the remainder of the documents handed to him which were not used in Court in his evidence?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have given all the information in my power. The documents were handed to him for the purpose of being used in evidence, and have been published to all the world.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): If these were private documents of Le Caron's, I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he considers that the documents which Le Caron swore had been sent, over a period of years, to the Government, and for which he had received money from the Government, remained the property of Le Caron after the payment of the money?

MR. MATTHEWS: When I stated that the letters remained the property of Le Caron I stated the ordinary rule of law—that the writer of a letter does not part with the property in it. As for the rest of the hon. Member's question, I must decline to answer it.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire whether all the documents were used in the Commission, or whether any of them remained in the hands of Houston?

MR. MATTHEWS: The hon. Member must put a Question on the Paper, and I will then consider whether I can answer it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: In view of the answers which have been given in connection with Mr. Anderson, I beg leave to give notice that on the Vote on Account relating to the Metropolitan Police I shall call attention to the conduct of Mr. Anderson in handing over confidential documents without leave from the Secretary of State, and its bearing upon his position as Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Metropolitan Police.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to an allegation in the first leader of the *Times* of the 14th of March that, while the case for the *Times* was proceeding before the Special Commission, official information was placed by the Government at the disposal of Mr. Soames; whether the official information has been imparted at the request of the *Times*, or spontaneously offered; and, if the latter, by whom it has been offered; whether his attention has been directed to the following statement in the article in question:—

> "We have no doubt similar information will be in like manner at the disposal of Mr. Lewis if he thinks he can make any use of it;"

and has such information been supplied?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer the Question. The information to which the hon. Member alludes was imparted at the request of Mr. Soames. I have observed in the House more than once that the Government desire so far as is possible to deal equally by all parties appearing before the Commission. Some information has been supplied to Mr. Lewis in the manner suggested.

MR. MAC NEILL: Was the information supplied to Mr. Soames supplied by the advice of the first law officer of the Crown?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The information has nothing to do with the first law officer of the Crown. The Government acted in accordance with what they conceived to be their duty.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, what are the intentions of the Government with respect to legislation against corrupt practices at municipal elections in Scotland.

*MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON: Definite proposals upon this important matter have been under consideration; but, having regard to the other legislative

engagements of the Government, I cannot at present give any undertaking on the subject.

POLITICAL PRISONERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, pending the investigation into the rules observed in Irish prisons, he will use his influence with the Lord Lieutenant to induce him to issue a Prisons Order in Council to suspend the rules which require that a prisoner having himself clean clothes and being a cleanly person should be clothed in prison dress and have his hair cut, and his beard (if any) shaved off; to allow prisoners to be furnished with books; to provide prisoners who are accustomed to a generous diet with such additions to the prison dietary as may be advantageous to their health; and to separate those who are imprisoned for offences, the motive of which was political rather than personal, from hardened and habitual criminals?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member's Question refers to more than one kind of modification of existing prison rules. He desires, in the first place, to make prison more comfortable; in the second place, to draw a distinction between prisoners according to the motives which have actuated them; and in the third place, to carry out certain, alterations which I myself suggested on Wednesday last. As the object of all imprisonment is to deter offenders, I do not see that there is any adequate grounds for adopting the first of his proposals. As regards the second, I believe all efforts at classifying prisoners according to the motives of their offences have hitherto proved ineffectual, and I certainly cannot embark upon any undertaking of the kind, except under the advice of competent authorities. As regards the third suggestion, however, I am considering whether it would be expedient to advise the Lord Lieutenant to carry out, without unnecessary delay, the ideas which I laid before the House the day before yesterday.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Does the right hon. Gentleman wish the House to understand that the provisions of the Prisons' Act of 1877, classifying prisoners according to their offences have proved ineffectual?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I made no comment as to whether they were right or wrong. I intended to indicate that the elaborate classification according to motive has hitherto proved impossible to carry out.

THE PONSONBY ESTATE.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether his attention has been called to a letter in the *Freeman's Journal*, of 13th March, in which Mr. H. H. Townsend, agent for the syndicate which has bought the Ponsonby estate, declared it is the intention of the syndicate to evict all the tenants who do not purchase their holdings or otherwise settle on terms proposed by the Syndicate; and whether he will draw the attention of the Land Purchase Commissioners to the pressure thus brought to bear upon the tenants, and suggest to the Commissioners any steps which may protect the tenants from practical compulsion?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have seen the letter to which the hon. Gentleman alludes. It in no way conveys the meaning which he appears to attribute to it. I have no doubt the Land Commission will take note of any circumstances which may render a sale under the Ashbourne Act inexpedient or illegal.

YOUGHAL.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether any informations were sworn indicating a probable disturbance of the peace in the town of Youghal upon any one of the anniversaries of the death of O'Hanlon; if there were, would he lay them upon the Table of the House; and, if not, would he state upon whose application those large bodies of extra police were sent to Youghal?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not had time to obtain a report on the subject, but the hon. Member must be aware that the police do not require a sworn information before taking precautions they may think necessary for the preservation of the public peace.

PEMBA AND ZANZIBAR.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): I beg to ask the Under

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is a fact that Her Majesty's Government have consented to unite with the German Government in a blockade of the islands of Pemba and Zanzibar, in substitution of a blockade of the coast?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): I shall be much obliged if my hon. Friend will postpone his Question until Monday.

FATHER M'FADDEN.

MR. MAC NEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, during the confinement of Father M'Fadden, who is at present a prisoner in Derry Gaol, one warder is specially told off to guard the prisoner; and, if so, from what motive; and was the same course taken when Father Stephens was in confinement in the same prison, at the same time as Father M'Fadden, awaiting his trial before the resident magistrates?

MR. A. J. BALFFOUR: The Prisons Board inform me that they have no official knowledge as to the disposal of the prison officers by the governor of any prison for the safe keeping of those committed to his charge. The governor is solely responsible for the custody of his prisoners, and is bound to take such steps as he may consider necessary.

THE BAMFORD POST OFFICE.

MR. HOYLE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood): I beg to ask the Postmaster General, if the vacancy at the Post Office, Bamford, near Rochdale, has been filled; and, if so, whether the appointment has been made in accordance with the wishes of the principal inhabitants, as expressed in a memorial forwarded in the usual way?

*MR. RAIKES: Mrs. Grindrod, who is, I understand, the person on whose behalf the inhabitants petitioned, has been nominated Sub-Postmistress at Bamford and, if eligible and able to perform the duties of the office in a satifactory manner, she will in due course be appointed.

THE METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS.

SIR J. COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, whether tenders for the construction of a portion of the Blackwall Tunnel scheme have been, or were to be, opened by the Metropolitan Board of Works on this day; and, whether, in view of the fact that this Board will cease to exist in a few days' time, it is their intention to take any action which will commit the County Council with reference to such tenders?

MR. TATTON EGERTON: In answer to the Question I have to inform the hon. Member that the Board have, after a discussion of two hours and a half, opened tenders for the Blackwall Tunnel, and have approved the lowest. They have so informed the contractor. The contract will come up for sealing at the next meeting of the Board.

LORD R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): May I ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether, in view of the fact—and notwithstanding his strong expression of opinion yesterday—that the Metropolitan Board of Works have proceeded to consider tenders for this project and have accepted one of them, he is prepared, as President of the Local Government Board, to intimate either to the County Council or to the ratepayers of the Metropolis any measures which may be open to them to take to render absolutely nugatory what appears to be a very gross abuse of authority?

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Motion in favour of the acceptance of this tender was first negatived, but that by some strange ruling it was put by the chairman and carried; whether the tender accepted is £38,000 over the estimate formed by the chief engineer; whether the contract is to be confirmed next week; and whether the right hon. Gentleman will exercise his powers under the Act to arrest this shameless action.

*MR. RITCHIE: After what took place last night I at once caused a letter to be written to the Metropolitan Board of Works. It is to the effect that the President of the Local Government Board wished his opinion to be conveyed to the Metropolitan Board of Works that action, such as that suggested, would, in the circumstances, be very inexpedient, and expressing a strong hope that the Board would not proceed

to bind their successors in a matter of so much importance; but that they would leave the matter open for the consideration of the London County Council on their resumption of office. I have no knowledge of what took place other than that of which the House has been informed by the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire. I would point out, in reply to my noble Friend, that section 109 (1) of the Local Government Act is as follows—

"Subject as in this Act mentioned, the appointed day for the purposes of this shall, in each county, be the 1st day of April next after the passing thereof, or such other day, earlier or later as the Local Government Board (but after the election of County Councillors for such county on the application of the Provisional Council or County Council) may appoint, either generally or with reference to any particular provision of this Act, and different days may be appointed for different purposes and different provisions of this Act, whether contained in the same section or in different sections or for different counties."

In the circumstances of this case, I think, if the Local Government Board were to receive from the Provisional Council of the County of London an application to advance the appointed day, either with reference to this particular power of entering into contracts or generally, prior to the contract being sealed—which I understand is to take place on Friday next—it would be the duty of the Local Government Board to give such application their most careful consideration.

MR. LAWSON: To elicit the truth, I should like to ask the hon. Member for Knutsford Division of Cheshire whether the tender accepted by the Board was for £318,000, and that the estimate of the Chief Engineer was £280,000, thus making a difference of £38,000 between the estimate and the tender?

MR. TATTON EGERTON: The hon. Member's figures are perfectly correct. But I should like to remind the House that the estimates of the Engineer did not include the liability which the contractor has to undertake of any accident taking place in the works, which are unprecedented and which have never been tried on so large a scale before.

SIR J. COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): Did the Metropolitan Board of Works receive from the County Council a request not to accept the tender?

MR. TATTON EGERTON: Yes, it is so.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, whether the Board will postpone the consideration of any further grants of pensions to officers of the Board, and leave the question to be decided by the London County Council?

MR. TATTON EGERTON: The Board of Works have no further applications for pensions beyond those which are on the Board's agenda paper to-day, and which have been recommended for approval.

FIRST-CLASS MISDEMEANANTS.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he proposes to bring in a Bill to provide that persons convicted of offences under the Vaccination Acts, or of obstructing the highway by religious services, or of other offences of similar character, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, should be treated as first-class misdemeanants?

MR. MATTHEWS: I should have been better able to answer the Question if the hon. Member had specified "the other offences" which he considers to be of a "similar character" to offences under the Vaccination Acts and the Highway Acts. The magistrates have already the power of largely mitigating the punishments inflicted on summary conviction of substituting a fine for any imprisonment, and possibly (although this is a matter of doubt) of ordering the offender to be treated as a first-class misdemeanant; and I wish they would use those powers more freely in some of the cases which the hon. Member has in view. But I have known cases under the Vaccination Acts where a parent is guilty of cruelty to his children and selfish disregard of the public welfare, with no good motive whatever; and cases under the Highway Acts, accompanied by riotous conduct and serious public nuisance, which are not deserving of lenient treatment; and I should not be prepared to bring in a Bill of the sweeping character described by the hon. Gentleman making imprisonment as a first-class misdemeanant in all cases the only penalty for offences of that kind.

FLOGGING IN THE BAHAMAS.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether, by the law prevailing in the Bahamas, a person convicted upon indictment of an assault upon a Judge can be punished with flogging, and, if so, whether he will state the authority?

*THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir R. E. WEBSTER, Isle of Wight): By Section 23 of the Bahamas Statute, 4 Will. IV., c. 25, as amended by the 63rd Section of the Bahamas Statute, 28 Vict., c. 3, a person committing a felony after a previous conviction can, upon conviction for such second offence, be whipped. The person in question committed such an assault upon the learned Judge that it undoubtedly amounted to an attempt to murder. It was, I believe, under the Statute to which I have referred that the Chief Justice purported to order the whipping. As I have already stated in this House, that punishment was, in my opinion, illegal.

MR. MACNEILL: Were steps taken for the removal of the Chief Justice?

*SIR R. E. WEBSTER: The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies has already stated that the Chief Justice was removable by the Governor and Council of the Colony, subject to an appeal to the Home Authorities.

THE TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is correctly reported in *Hansard*, vol. 322, page 1,456, on the Debate upon the Rule of Procedure respecting the right of a Minister of the Crown to move the suspension of the 12 o'clock rule—

"The object in view was to afford the opportunity of closing a great Debate in a manner which would conduce to the proper conclusion of very grave and important Questions. It would be obviously improper that the Minister, or the Member of the Opposition, who had to wind up a very important Debate should be exposed to the necessity of crowding his observations into a few minutes:"

and whether he is prepared to assure the House that the suspension of the 12 o'clock rule will only be moved on such occasions during the present Session?

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand, Westminster): I have already dealt with the Question of the hon. Gentleman in debate, and in answer to questions put to me last Session; but I repeat, if the hon. Member desires me to do so, that I entirely deny I entered into any engagement with the House so restrictive as that which he would put into my mouth. I referred to a great debate by way of illustration of the use of the provision of the Standing Order, and it would obviously have been absurd for a Minister to deny to himself the power to move to suspend the order with regard to supply, which, under present conditions, is frequently the most urgent business the House has to consider.

ESTATES IN CHANCERY.

MR. T. ROBINSON (Gloucester): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill this Session to amend the law and practice in regard to the administration of estates in the Court of Chancery, with the view of preventing the great delay, and diminishing the heavy cost so frequently attending such administration in that Court; and whether he will consider the desirability of having a yearly official Return made of all estates in course of administration in the Court of Chancery, and of taking power to transfer the administration of any such estates as may be found to be insolvent into the Bankruptcy Court, to be wound up according to the practice of that Court and in sight of the public.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government intend to deal with the subject of the first part of the Question by carrying out as far as possible the recommendations of the Committee presided over by the Master of the Rolls, whose Report is on the Table of the House; but we are not at present able to say whether legislation will become necessary to give full effect to those recommendations. With regard to the second part of the Question, which requires much consideration, the Lord Chancellor will be communicated with.

COURSE OF BUSINESS.

MR. SEXTON: With reference to the Business of the House, I wish to call attention to the following announcement in the *Times*:—

"Parliamentary Notices, House of Commons, Friday, March 15.

Notices of Motions.

At half-past 3 o'clock.

"Mr. W. H. Smith,—That the proceedings of the Committee of Supply, if the Committee be sitting at 12 o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order 'Sittings of the House'

"Mr. W. H. Smith,—That so much of Standing Order 11 as requires that the question shall be proposed 'that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair' be suspended this day; and that the provisions of Standing Order 56 be extended to this day's sitting of the Committee of Supply."

As there is no Notice of the Motion in the name of the right hon. Gentleman, either upon the notice of proceedings circulated to hon. Members or on the Orders of the Day now in our possession, I beg to ask whether those notices are mere inventions of the *Times*, or whether there is any reason to believe that any intermediary between the Government and the *Times* has forged them.

*MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not responsible for anything except that which appears on the Papers of the House. I have no idea how these notices appeared in the *Times* newspaper.

THE MURDER OF INSPECTOR MARTIN.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland whether he will fulfil the promise given yesterday, and say how many persons have been arrested in connection with the murder of District Inspector Martin?

MR. MADDEN: Thirty-eight persons were arrested, and either 20 or 21 were subsequently discharged. Of those discharged one has since been re-arrested, having since been identified as one of the assailants of Mr. Martin. These figures include all arrests.

CAPTAIN SEGRAVE.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary what has become of Captain Segrave, the hero of Mitchelstown, who has been absent from his duties ever since I brought his conduct before the consideration of the House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Captain Segrave has been on leave, and he will not be called upon to perform his magisterial duties again until we have received information from the Cape on the point raised by the hon. Member.

DR. TANNER: Could not a wire be sent to the Cape to find if Captain Segrave was not dismissed from his post there?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Documents cannot be transferred by wire, and it would not be fair to Captain Segrave to take any final action without such documents.

MR. MACNEILL: I have before called attention to the fact that these documents can be found at No. 25, Victoria Street, Westminster, the office of the Agent-General for Cape Colony in London.

DR. TANNER: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the columns of the *Cape Gazette* will be placed at my disposal in order that I may point out to the Chief Secretary the date of Captain Segrave's dismissal?

BARON H. DE WORMS: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will give notice of his Question.

NAVY (EFFECTIVE SHIPS OF WAR).

Returns ordered, "arranged under the following Classes, showing for each Class the number, tonnage, and cost of the Effective Ships of the Royal Navy—

1. Afloat on the 1st day of January, 1889;

2. Standard of strength of Navy decided upon;

3. Required to bring present numbe up to proposed standard;

4. Required in five years to replace loss by depreciation, &c.;

and, assuming that financial provision for deficiency be spread over a period of years, the number, tonnage, and estimated cost of ships to be built between the 1st day of April, 1889, and the 31st day of March, 1894.

Return No. 1.

Class.	Effective Ships afloat 1st January, 1889*.			Proposed standard in 1894.		Required to complete standard.		Expenditure required to complete Ships building.	Expenditure on Ships to be built.	Annual depreciation, as shown in the Estimates 1889-90.	Difference between expenditure proposed and depreciation as estimated.	Remarks.
	Number.	Tonnage.	Cost.	Number.	Tonnage.	Number.	Cost.					
			£				£	£	£	£	£	
Armoured:												
Battle Ships, 1st Class												
,, 2nd ,, ...												
,, Others												
Cruisers, 1st Class												
,, 2nd ,, ...												
,, Others												
Total armoured												
Protected:												
Cruisers, 1st Class												
,, 2nd ,, ...												
,, 3rd ,, ...												
,, Others												
Torpedo Depôt Ships												
Total protected												
Unprotected:												
Corvettes												
Sloops												
Gun Vessels												
Torpedo Cruisers												
Torpedo Gun Boats												
Gun Boats												
Torpedo Boats, 1st Class												
,, 2nd ,, ...												
Despatch Vessels												
Miscellaneous												
Total unprotected												
Grand total												

* Effective Ships are understood to comprise all Ships afloat, except those which will probably be removed from the List of the Navy as obsolete, and not worth repair, in the period between the 1st day of April 1889 and the 1st day of April 1894.

Return No. 2.

Statement showing in detail the names of the Ships comprised in Column No. 1 of Return No. 1, giving against each the following information :—

Name.	Class.	Tonnage.	Speed.	When launched.	If not in commission estimated expense required to fit for commission.	Remarks.

Note.—The Columns to be totalled for Classes as shown for Return No. 1.

Return No. 3.

Names, guns, tonnage, and speed of the Ships afloat in the Royal Navy on the 1st day of January, 1889, but which, being obsolete in type or speed, are not included in the "effective" Ships shown in Returns Nos. 1 and 2 :—

Name.	Class.	Tonnage.	Speed.	When launched.	How now employed.	Where stationed	Remarks.

Note.—To be arranged under the classification adopted in Return No. 1.

RETURN No. 4.

Statement of the Naval Expenditure on Shipbuilding and Repairs, &c., in the five years ending on the 31st day of March 1879 and the four years ending on the 31st day of March 1889, compared with the proposed Expenditure for the five years ending on the 31st day of March 1893 :—

Nature of expenditure.	1876	1877	1878	1879	For four years. Total.	For four years. Average.	1886	1887	1888	1889 estimated.	For four years. Total.	For four years. Average.	1890	1891	1892	1893	For four years. Total.	For four years. Average.
New Constructions ...																		
Repairs, &c.																		
Armaments																		
Total of Shipbuilding Expenditure from Naval and Army Funds.																		

RETURN No. 5.

Comparison of the proposed standard for 1894, shown in Column No. 2, Return No. 1, for the British Navy, with the number of Ships, either effective or building, or about to be built of corresponding Classes in French, Russian, German, and Italian Navies in 1894 :—

Class.	Proposed for England.	France.	Russia.	Germany.	Italy.
Armoured :					
Battle Ships, 1st Class					
,, 2nd ,, ...					
,, others					
Cruisers, 1st Class...					
,, 2nd ,, ...					
,, others					
Total armoured... ...					
Protected :					
Cruisers, 1st Class					
,, 2nd ,, ...					
,, 3rd ,, ...					
,, others					
Torpedo Depôt Ships					
Total protected... ...					
Unprotected :					
Corvettes					
Sloops					
Gun Vessels					
Torpedo Cruisers					
Torpedo Gun Boats					
Gun Boats					
Torpedo Boats, 1st Class ...					
,, 2nd ,, ..					
Despatch Vessels					
Miscellaneous...					
Total unprotected... ...					
Grand total					

—(*Lord Randolph Churchill*).

MOTIONS.

ECCLESIASTICAL DILAPIDATIONS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Harry Davenport, Bill for the amendment of the Law relating to Ecclesiastical Dilapidations, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Harry Davenport, Mr. Salt, Baron Dimsdale, and Mr. Gurdon.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 159].

ROYALTIES AND FORESHORE RIGHTS (IRELAND) BILL.

On the motion of Mr. Murphy, Bill to provide for vesting in the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland Royalties, Foreshore Rights, and Water Rights connected with lands sold under the Purchase of Lands (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Murphy, Mr. Parnell, Mr. T. D. Sullivan, and Mr. Clancy.

Bill presented and read first time. [Bill 160.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

*Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think, Sir, I am at liberty to express a hope that the discussion on to going into Committee of Supply to-night may be so far restricted as to permit the House considering in Committee the Supplementary Estimates. I believe that it is the wish of hon. gentlemen opposite that the Vote on Account should be taken on Monday next, but it is impossible to do that unless the Supplementary Estimates are first disposed of. I appeal, therefore, to the House to endeavour as far as possible to give the facilities which are necessary in order to enable us to comply with the wishes of hon. Gentlemen.

SALARIES OF CABINET MINISTERS.

*Mr. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): At a time when it is proposed to largely increase the expenditure of the country, it is necessary that we should examine seriously how far our system of administration is such as to secure that the enormous sums voted by Parliament are not wasted, but that the country has value received for its expenditure, whether military, naval, or domestic. I contend that a system which, in two changes of Ministry, one Liberal and one Conservative, placed only one Minister besides the Prime Minister in the position they previously occupied, gives no such security; that when first introduced into new Departments the Minister has to learn his work, and that our Departments are therefore during most of the time under the charge not of duly trained administrators, but of apprentices. It is government by apprentices not by statesmen, and, as I shall show, the results are most unsatisfactory and discreditable, and in the present state of European politics may any day prove fatally disastrous. Under present conditions of war, large armaments, improved engines of destruction, and rapid transit, we shall not be allowed time, as we were in the Crimean war, to amend our system and to correct its blunders. I have not brought forward this question from any love of abstract principles or desire of theoretical uniformity, but simply because, having for twenty years closely watched the practical results of our present strange system of constituting the Parliamentary Executive of this great Empire, I have become convinced that they are as pernicious as the system, or rather want of system, is absurd and indefensible. When we consider that an apprenticeship is required to make a mason, or a carpenter, or a blacksmith, it seems to me strange to suppose that the duties of a statesman conducting the affairs of Ireland, of our Colonies, of India, of the Army or of the Navy, or of presiding over those departments which have the charge of the health and local government of our country, its poor and its education, may be taken up by anyone without previous knowledge or experience, nay, that the same man without any training for the posts, may be able to manage any number or variety of these departments in rapid succession with success and advantage to the country. It would, indeed, almost appear as if it were supposed that previous ignorance of the work of the department which a man was asked to conduct was the best qualification for success in it. The consequence, I venture to say, has been, and must be, that, with an amount of ability and devotion to the Public Service on the part of our statesmen on both sides of the House of which it is not easy to speak too highly, and

freedom from that corruption that pervades the administration of autocratic Russia, and democratic America and France, the most serious blunders are constantly committed and repeated—blunders which would have been impossible if our ministers possessed any thorough knowledge of the history and experience of the departments over which they were called upon to preside. It is surprising, and only due to the admirable permanent officials which the country has the happiness to possess, that the blunders have not been even more numerous. My contention is, that ministers are changed about from one office of the State to another apparently without due regard to their previous qualifications or experience, and that the relative estimation in which these offices are held and treated is absurd in the extreme. For instance, the Secretary for War, of the Colonies, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, are considered to be officers of first-class importance, while the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the President of the Local Government Board, or of Trade, or the Minister of Education, ministers on whom the health and welfare and the character of our people depend, are held to occupy offices of second-class in importance and emolument, not necessarily held by Cabinet Ministers; and if a man shows any ability in these Home Departments, so important to the interests of the United Kingdom, he is on the first opportunity removed as promotion to the external or to the spending and defensive offices of the State. I will give a few instances to show how wretchedly this system works; and I will take one from each side of the House. In both cases not a word can be said against the zeal, ability, and patriotism with which the men in question did their work. It was the system, and the system alone, which was to blame for the results, or want of results, which have ensued. I will take an instance from the Liberal side first, and from that department of the State in the work of which I have long felt especial interest, and know most about, I mean that of the Local Government Board. When the health of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Edinburgh, broke down owing to his labours, in attempting to cleanse the then Augean stables of the Admiralty, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was at the head of the Poor Law Board, and had shown such ability in that position, and such a determination to get to the bottom of things, that he had won the confidence of both sides of the House, and great expectations were formed of what he would be able to do in carrying out those reforms which he advocated, and which for 17 years we have since been annually told were to be the first objects of the exertions of the Ministry, whether Conservative or Liberal. It was only last year we made a serious beginning with these reforms, but most of the work then contemplated still remains to be done. On the other hand, my right hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax, was Secretary to the Treasury, and had been Secretary to the Admiralty, and had shown in the latter department very great ability. What was done? The present Chancellor of the Exchequer being first in turn for promotion was taken from the Department which he was beginning to understand, and where he had given great promises of reform, and placed at the head of the Navy, of which he knew nothing, and my right hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax, who had been a great success at the Admiralty, and had paid no special attention to the question of Local Government and expenditure, was placed at the head of the Local Government Board. The consequence was just what might have been expected. The reforms in Local Government have still to be carried out, and in the meantime the debts of the local authorities have risen from £41,000,000 to £147,234,000; and though much of the money has no doubt been well spent, it is notorious that considerable sums, especially in the smaller local districts, have been wasted, and we are still without a reasonably effective system of local government. On the other hand, in the Navy, the reforms commenced by my right hon. Friend the the Member for Edinburgh have never been followed up by further necessary improvements, and we have had recently very disagreeable disclosures necessitating the appointment of a Committee of inquiry. From all sides come complaints or admissions that, while the country has spent enormous sums on her Navy, it is not in a state which the

country has a right to expect from her efforts and sacrifices. But how under such a system can we expect to escape what the First Lord of the Admiralty himself described as the scandal of recent disclosures of mismanagement? The First Lord said rightly that the responsibility of undertaking expenditure must be with the Government, but of course, the Government must rely to a large extent on their subordinate and permanent officers. No one has been dismissed for the recent scandals that have occurred, and it is said that you cannot dismiss these permanent men because you gave them more to do than they could possibly accomplish. Whose fault was that unreasonable expectation? And who ought to have set it right? Why, of course, the head of the Department. But you cannot reasonably blame him, as you never gave him time to become thoroughly acquainted with the work of the Department and with its officials. He cannot judge what his men can do, or the fitness of those under him to do certain work. The country has never grudged the necessary payment for a good Navy, but it does grudge the large sums which are admitted on all hands to be absolutely wasted, admittedly without giving us satisfactory results. If the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had been allowed in 1871 to carry out those reforms in local government which he had got his hands upon, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, who already knew the details and ropes of the Admiralty, had been allowed to carry on and carry forward the reforms initiated by the right hon. Member for Edinburgh, it is not unreasonable to suppose that we should not have been kept waiting 18 years afterwards for the necessary reforms in both those Departments. I do not want to depreciate the improvement which those statesmen effected in their respective Departments; indeed, in that which I understand best, my right hon. Friend the Member for Halifax laid the foundation for future reforms in the local government of the country, but it stands to reason that he would have been able to carry matters much further had he not been forced to commence by studying the details of what to him was an entirely new Department. But, alas for the country's interests, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was in the Cabinet in order of promotion before the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax; and the management of our Navy was considered a Department of greater dignity with higher emolument than the Local Government Board. Therefore, in justice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was placed in the department of which he was comparatively ignorant, and the right hon. Gentleman for Halifax was placed in a Department of which he was comparatively ignorant, because the Department on which the health and good government of the country depend is considered of secondary dignity, importance, and emolument to the Navy, Army, &c. I repeat, it was in personal justice to an individual that that transfer was made. But where was justice to the country in this transfer, and is not the system pernicious which places personal justice to the individual in conflict with justice to the interests of the nation? Well now, to take a case from the Conservative side. I had the honour of sitting for three years in the 1874 Parliament under the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, on a Committee to enquire into the Local Government and taxation of towns in Ireland. We soon found that the question could not be considered without taking the question of the whole Local Government of Ireland into consideration, and the different areas and duties of Local Government were so confused and overlapping that it was impossible to consider the urban apart from the rural side of the question. We sat for three sessions, the then Chief Secretary for Irelan showing as chairman patience, impartiality, and a thorough devotion to the work, which won for him the esteem and confidence of both sides of the Committee. The evidence showed an unexpected amount of scope and capacity for Local Government in Ireland, and led to a report upon which, undoubtedly, the right hon. Gentleman would have been able to found a Bill at once liberal and safe for the Local Government of Ireland, which might if adopted then have done much to engage the attention of the active spirits in Ireland in Local Government, given them an opportunity of representing effectually their interests and opinions without tumult or disturbance, and

would thus have gone very far, I believe, in training them for self-government and in preserving order. But Lord Carnarvon retired just then from the Colonial office; and the Chief Secretaryship for Ireland, which probably has been for many years the most important and difficult office in the ministry, was, as it constantly has been, treated as an office of secondary dignity and importance. The very fact of the right hon. Gentleman having shown great ability and devotion to the office marked him out for promotion, as it is considered, from the Government of Ireland to the Government of our distant Colonies. He was transferred therefore to the Colonial office as a matter of justice to him, and Mr. James Lowther was appointed to succeed him at the Irish office, and nothing came of the labours of that important Committee. But where, I ask again, was the justice to the interests of the nation in that transfer? Did it produce compensating benefits in the Colonies? It became my duty subsequently, in order to support an Amendment which I carried against the right hon. Gentleman, to read up thoroughly papers connected with our African policy and the initiation of the Zulu War. For that policy, as Colonial Secretary at the time it commenced, Sir Michael Hicks Beach, the right hon. Member for West Bristol was officially responsible. It was perfectly evident from his despatches that the right hon. Gentleman's instinct was that that War would be a mistake; but being new in his office, he contented himself with strongly and repeatedly cautioning Sir Bartle Frere; but, new and inexperienced in his office, he did not feel sufficient confidence in his own judgment to restrain Sir Bartle, and, after strong and repeated cautions, gave him a free hand. Sir Bartle Frere, no doubt, thought that the Government at home did not feel confidence in themselves, but, as he always did feel absolutely confident in his own views, he went to war. No one now believes in the wisdom of the Zulu War, and to it may be traced all the trouble which followed in South Africa and which continues to trouble us there now. I firmly believe that these troubles in South Africa, as well as those in Ireland, from both of which we are still suffering, might have been averted by a consistent policy, had not the affairs of the two departments been in the hands of Ministers new to them. I refer any Member who wishes to convince himself of the truth of what I have stated to the Official Despatches of 1878-79 on South Africa. I will not detain the House by further instances, but I will appeal to any man who has watched the course of appointments and promotion on our Parliamentary Executive on both sides during the last 20 years, whether he could not point to instance after instance in which appointments to office or promotion have been fettered, and consequently injudicious, under the present system. Of course I know that it may be argued in reply to what I have said that it is very important to prevent the Public Departments of this country getting into a groove, and that a fresh hand coming into a Department from time to time introduces fresh life into it. But I may point out that the experience of late years shows that under a democratic constitution, such as we enjoy, changes of Government will be quite sufficiently frequent not only to ensure the infusion of fresh energy, but to make it very difficult to secure statesmen in the different Departments with sufficient Parliamentary experience and knowledge of the work of our public offices as Ministers of State. It would be, of course, absurd to contend that Ministers must be always confined to or have a vested interest in the Department in which they began official life. The talents developed by men in office, and the needs of the public service, will frequently require such changes, particularly in men of exceptional brilliancy, who may become Prime Ministers, but it should not be the rule to move men about from place to place without ever a chance of acquiring thorough knowledge of the work of the Departments and of the men under them who have to carry out the work, and whose work and promotion they have to apportion and direct. Surely such is not work to be entrusted to men inexperienced and ignorant—to mere apprentices in the department. I think it will astonish anyone who will take out as I have done, in the paper which I hold in my hand, the changes that have taken place in the occupants of the different offices when the same party is in power, to see how men have been moved about

from office to office, hardly any of them having been allowed to retain the same office long enough to become thoroughly acquainted with and exercised in the duties they have to perform. The Conservatives quitted office in 1868, and returned in 1874. We find only five offices were filled by the same men in 1874 as in 1868, while 13 had new chiefs, and in 8 cases there had been more than one change of office during the same time. The Liberals left office in 1874 and returned in 1880. Only two Ministers, including the Premier, returned to their former offices, while 16 offices had new chiefs, and in no less than 16 cases had there been more than one change of office during these few years. The Conservatives left office in 1880, and returned in 1885. Here again, only two men returned to their previous offices, while 16 offices had new chiefs, and in 4 cases there had been more than one change of office in the period. The Liberals left office in 1885, and returned the very next year; yet, after that short interval, only three returned to their old offices, and 15 had new chiefs. The Conservatives left office and returned to it in the same year, 1886, but only six of them returned to their previous offices, while in one year 12 out of 18 offices were placed under new chiefs. Is it possible to conceive that the affairs of even an ordinary business—let alone the vast and complicated concerns of this great Empire—could be successfully managed with so little of that thoroughness of training or completeness of knowledge as can alone be possessed by men who serve some time, instead of being thus rapidly moved from one office to another, apparently hardly ever placed again in the same office, hardly ever having any chance of understanding their work thoroughly? Is it to be wondered at that our legislation is the constant theme of contemptuous comment by our Judges, or that the country is constantly exposed to dangers and difficulties which nothing but the tenacity, energy, and spirit of her people have succeeded in fighting her through, not under the wise guidance of, but in spite of the superficial, hasty, incomplete legislation and administration of, the Government of this country. It may seem somewhat presumptuous in one who has not been a Minister, and who, not having entered Parliament till he was 50, has never considered himself fit to be a Minister, to venture to criticize the formation of the Executive, and the conditions under which they are expected to work; but it is, according to the old proverb, the lookers-on who often see more of the play than the actors themselves, and those who have felt how very superficial and imperfect our present system is, are naturally led to study the cause of those defects. I do not wish to detain the House, or I could give other instances of the strange way in which Ministers are by both parties placed in the offices of which they have least experience, thus throwing away all the advantages of their knowledge and training previously acquired. In former days, when men came very young into the House and were put young into under-Secretaryships, there might be an advantage in giving men of exceptional ability and genius the experience of several Departments; but now that the affairs of the country have become vast and complicated, and when, unfortunately, few men are taken into the Executive sufficiently young to give time to serve an apprenticeship to one Executive office after another, the practical result, I do not hesitate to say, is a most superficial and inefficient way of carrying on the business of the country and of its dependencies. The opinions I have expressed are not confined to men like myself, who have never held, or sought to hold, office. I have discussed the subject frequently with men on both the front Benches, and I have rarely found any who have defended the present system of moving men about so rapidly and putting the round peg into the square hole and the square peg into the round hole. On the contrary, I have found those men who are most anxious to serve their country and to do their work thoroughly, complain bitterly of the injury to the country and to their chances of serving it with credit to themselves, owing to their having been moved so rapidly, even where it was nominally promotion, and just when they were beginning to feel that they were learning the work of their department and saw their opportunity of doing good work in it. Many Members of this House will remember the satirical reply of Mr. Disraeli (who could not

resist a good hit at even his own acts), when remonstrated with by a man who understood Local Government, but knew nothing of trade, and whom he offered to make President of the Board of Trade. "Well, I suppose you know as much about trade as the First Lord does about ships." By the Resolution I am about to move I maintain that it is desirable at any rate to remove difficulties arising out of personal claims for promotion, from the path of the Minister who has to decide who is to be placed at the head of any vacant department. With this object I contend that all the great departments of State except those held by the Lord Chancellor and Prime Minister, should, as regards salary and dignity, be put on an equal footing, and that we should remove the most absurd anomaly of all, that of treating such offices as that of the Education Department, the President of the Local Government Board, upon whom depend the internal good government of England, or that of the Chief Secretary of Ireland, upon whose devoted head most of the important departments of Irish Administration are concentrated, as secondary departments of the State, only to be held by men till they have tried their 'prentice hand upon them, and shown sufficient ability to be transferred to some more dignified and higher-paid office, and their places supplied by some raw hand who has to practise upon them as the *corpus vile* of the Constitution. I do not, for a moment, suggest or believe that it is the difference in the pecuniary value of the different offices that produces the evil I complain of. I have no doubt that our Statesmen would prefer an office of higher dignity and importance at a sacrifice of pecuniary emolument. But the difference of salary is held to denote a difference of dignity and importance in the several offices; and it is that difference of dignity and importance that causes the supposed necessity for what is considered due promotion from one to the other. I will just sum up the present position of the twelve most important State Departments as they have been handed down from time immemorial, without material change. There are five Secretaries of State, a First Lord of the Treasury, and a Chancellor of the Exchequer, each receiving £5,000 a year; the First Lord of the Admiralty, £4,500. [Sir G. TREVELYAN: And a house.]—The Chief Secretary for Ireland, £4,425. [Sir G. TREVELYAN: He has a house also.] And the Presidents of the Board of Trade, of the Local Government Board, and Education—who do not have houses—each with salaries of £2,000 a year. It cannot be for a moment contended that, in this commercial country, with its dense population, vast and complicated interests and problems, the Ministers who are to direct the Boards of Trade, of Local Government, and of Education are of less importance than the Secretaries of the Colonies, &c., or that the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland, who is at once Home Secretary, President of the Local Board, and chief of a number of important offices all rolled into one, requires a less able man at the head of it, or is of less importance than the office of Home Secretary or Secretary of the Admiralty or the Navy; and, again, no one will contend that for England the management of the Navy is a less difficult or less important department than the management of the Army. To equalize all, leaving present total cost the same, would reduce them to an average of £4,160 a year, while to level up and give each £5,000 a year would add only £10,000 to the payment of those who are responsible for the economical and efficient expenditure of about £60,000,000 a year. We ought to do one or other, to make it more easy than it is now to place in each Department the best man for it, and to keep him there so long as he is the best man for it, and no longer. The payment of the heads of our great Departments has been hitherto liberal, but not excessive, as compared with the payment for work requiring similar ability elsewhere. The manager of a great railroad and of other large establishments gets about the same salary permanently that the Minister at the head of the Navy gets temporarily; but it should be borne in mind that in autocratic Russia and in democratic France and America, you have men growing rich in office and by office, notoriously, from corruption and connection with the Stock Exchange, and any one who knows the frightful waste of public money and mismanagement and disaster which have in those countries arisen from their system will be most anxious to avoid anything of

the same nature here. As a man of business, if the business were my own, I can only say that I should consider undue parsimony in these matters as waste and not true economy. I wish to repeat that I do not pretend to find fault with the Prime Ministers of great ability, Conservative as well an Liberal, who have during the last 20 years presided over the Government of this country. The blame attaches to the system which they have inherited, and which has interfered with the free exercise of their discretion and judgment, to an extent of which they and other men brought up under this system are perhaps themselves hardly aware. Of course it is not desirable that the House of Commons should interfere with the discretion of the Prime Minister in the appointments of the several departments, but what we can do, and ought to do, is to remove from his path personal difficulties in the way of his selecting for a particular appointment the best man. We may facilitate this by putting all the higher Executive Offices of the State, except of course those of the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor, on the same level as to standing and emolument. But there is another evil and a growing one in the condition under which the duties of Ministerial Offices are now discharged. I need only say a single word, for everyone admits the evil, but almost everyone submits to it. I mean the great and growing evil of expecting that Ministers are not only to attend to the increasingly heavy duties which are placed upon them as the Executive of this country, but also to undertake out-of-doors an immense and increasing amount of public speaking, absolutely incompatible with the proper discharge of their departmental and Parliamentary work. The talents and genius of our first-class statesmen are a national treasure, and too valuable to be wasted by this absurd practice. When Ministers and Members of Parliament made only one speech a year to their constituents, they put all they had to say about their department or about politics carefully into it. The speeches were worth reading, and were read, and were the source of most of the political education of the country; but who can read, does read, or would be profited by reading, all the voluminous and superfiical talk and violent abuse that have taken the place of these valuable political speeches? Of course, every place likes to have a great man come and talk to it; but this, their amusement, is at the expense of the political education of the country, which is becoming as superficial and impoverished as the administration of the country is becoming enfeebled by this severe drain on the power of our statesmen. It is not a question that this House can legislate upon; we cannot give a Minister or a Member of Parliament a month's imprisonment, even as a first-class misdemeanant, for neglecting his duties to go on the stump; but we can protest—and I think it is a duty to protest—against a practice which demoralises and weakens the efficiency of the administrative and legislative powers of the Executive and Parliament.

Mr. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): I rise with great pleasure to second the Resolution which has been moved by my hon. Friend the Member for Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), and I do so with more pleasure, because he has carefully, as he always does, avoided any party or political controversy, and has divested the question of everything except those matters which are interesting to us all. It seems to me that any one who reads carefully the history of the changes of Ministry in this country since the great French war can come to no other conclusion than that my hon. Friend has made out his case most completely against a system which inevitably leaves the choice of men to fill great posts to be made, not on account of the aptitude or special knowledge of the persons selected, but simply because there has been arranged a heirarchy of offices which renders it necessary to give a man a particular amount of prestige when he is asked to join a government. Under such a condition of things you cannot avoid, and you inevitably have in many cases, the appointment of men who are neither fitted by their antecedents, or by special gifts, to fill the posts to which they are appointed. Now it seems to me that it requires a peculiarly elastic Parliamentary conscience to justify the putting, in this way, of the round men into square holes. There is no doubt that a round man may be put into a square hole and that he is put into one very frequently, but it can only be done, to use the

words of a worthy neighbour of mine, on the condition that he is a very soft man. A man of ordinary spirit and knowledge would refuse to be bound by the conditions of such a choice, which in reality must be intolerable and irksome to him beyond measure. Moreover, it seems to me that the remedy suggested is one that is easy in form and perfectly applicable in practice, and that it has other advantages besides those referred to by my hon. Friend. I cannot help thinking that one of the great evils in this country at the present moment is that the permanent officials have necessarily imposed upon them a greater weight than they ought to have in shaping the policy of the country. Of course, that is necessary under a system by which men are appointed to posts with regard to which they have no direct or special knowledge. It is obvious that in such cases they must depend upon the permanent officials. It is inconvenient and not Democratic in the best sense of the word, that Ministers in many instances should for a long period after their appointment be under the necessity of shaping their views not in accordance with the opinion they may have formed themselves after a study of the subject, but rather upon the conventional views which are held by the permanent officials. If we can emancipate Ministers from this influence, it seems to me that we should have a much more speedy response than we often have now to the demands which are made for economy and those other virtues which I am afraid are spoken about in this House a good deal more than they are put in practice. Then again, it appears to me that, in choosing a Cabinet, the Prime Minister very often has to make a selection of men upon principles which are not altogether desirable. Men are put into the Cabinet very frequently because they have filled posts of considerable prestige in connection with former Governments, and not because they are specially followed to discharge the particular duties of a Cabinet Minister, which are not merely administrative, but duties that require a good councillor and a man of broad views in shaping a general policy. Because a man is an able administrator, and fit to control a great Department in which expenditure takes place, it does not follow that he is better than or even as good as some other Member of the Government who is called upon to fill a post of smaller *prestige*. These are some of the reasons why, it appears to me, that it would be a great gain if we could destroy the artificial heirarchy of offices, and put all men, more or less, on the same footing and the same level, so that in appointing a man his distinct acquirements and aptitude for the work he has to do should be the first consideration, while the very last consideration should be his *prestige* and the necessity of appointing a man to a particular post because he might feel slighted if he were passed over. For these reasons I consider that my hon. Friend has made out his case, and very completely, and I have great pleasure in seconding his Motion.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "it is desirable that the Offices held by Members of the Cabinet (except those of Prime Minister and Lord Chancellor) should, as far as possible, be made equal in position and salary, so that, in making or changing appointments, no consideration of position or salary may interfere with or influence the selection of the Minister."—(*Mr. Rathbone,*)

—instead thereof.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH, Strand): I should have been glad if some hon. or right hon. Gentleman opposite had thought it right to rise in support of the Motion of my hon. Friend. I think it would have been, upon the whole, more satisfactory if those who are the natural successors of right hon. Gentlemen who sit on that bench had expressed an opinion upon the subject. I do not desire in the slightest degree to underrate the importance of the Question, which has been raised by my hon. Friend in a speech which was moderate and fair and not directed against any party in this House. On the contrary it was simply an endeavour to review the practice of Governments in years past with the hope of suggesting some improvement in the system which has prevailed. But I must remind my hon. Friend who moved the Resolution that if we go to the very bottom of his complaint it would be found that it is directed against the Parliamentary system of government which prevails in this country rather than against the

differences in salaries which exist between posts filled by Members of the Government and certain other posts. The hon. Member complains of the fact that in the formation of Governments men are not appointed to posts which they have filled in previous Governments, but to other offices. That is true, no doubt, to a very considerable extent, but I am not certain that the country has sustained very grievous loss because a man of proved ability in one post has been advanced to another where his abilities would prove of value to the country. I think that the country would lose rather than gain from the enforcement of the doctrine which the hon. Gentleman desires to lay down. The greatest duties they have to perform are those which belong to the head of a great Department. The practice at present is the result of the system under which the Government of this country is carried on, and unless the House or the country is prepared to substitute another system for it which will be quite independent of Parliament, it occurs to me that there would be the greatest possible difficuly in arriving at the accomplishment of the object which the hon. Gentleman desires. In ordinary occupations it is necessary for men to pass through a stage of apprenticeship, and similarly Ministers require training. There are numerous instances of men who have served in subordinate positions, and there shown abilities that have led to their subsequent promotion to higher places. It is desirable in considering this question to exclude all personal questions and to merely consider how the country could best be served. Under the present system, which gives the House of Commons power to dismiss any Government, the services of the most competent men on either side of the House are available. The hon. Gentleman desires to obtain men to fill the positions of head of each Department who are specially fitted. That is, no doubt, desirable, but it must not be forgotten that it is desirable that Ministers should have experience outside the Department over which they preside. It would be a very great misfortune if a Member of the Government was the only man who had any knowledge of the duties and business of his own particular Department, and if his judgment and opinion were not to be called in question by his colleagues. It is very desirable that the other Members of a Cabinet should be able to control and check any one Minister. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the question of salary, but this does not really affect the matter. A Minister who receives a lower salary does not necessarily occupy a lower position. There are frequent cases in which Ministers have, owing to their services being required in another Department, resigned one office and accepted another at a lower salary. This has been the case more than once in regard to the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, and the same thing had recently occurred in the case of the present President of the Board of Trade —an able and accomplished Statesman. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Howorth) asks for absolute equality of salary, but there is no such equality in the responsibilities and duties of the respective offices. The work of some Departments is so onerous that any remuneration within reason would not be excessive, while there are other Departments which do not make by any means the same demands upon the health and strength of the Ministers at their head. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the permanent officials, who, he says, frequently under the present system, shape the policy of the normal head of the Department, and he referred to the getting of round men into round, and square men into square holes. I hope when he is called upon to form a Government, he will find the absolutely round men in the round holes. Sir, I trust that the House will not accept the motion of my hon. Friend, though I admit that the moderation and good feeling with which he brought it forward. I should be glad, indeed if we could have in our Ministers as heads of departments, that special knowledge which would enable them at once to take command and control, but we must make a very considerable change before anything of that kind can be done. All I can say is, in reference to the permanent officials, that no country is better served by its permanent officials than is ours, no matter what Party is in office. They lay the facts before us in the most correct and straightforward way, and then it rests with the Head of the Department to shape the policy on the full and complete information which he has got.

Unless we had greater permanence and continuity of policy in our system, I admit I do not see how the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman is to be carried out; and I do not suppose the hon. Gentleman would suggest a vital alteration of our Constitution. I do not believe that the change in remuneration even would have any material effect. I believe that the men who are appointed to these offices are appointed as a rule on the ground of their fitness. It is the interest of the Prime Minister to constitute the best Government he can have, and he selects his ministers from experience of the qualifications of those appointed, and so the object of securing the best administration to carry on the business of the country, and to that task the present inequality of salaries proves our hindrance.

MR. RATHBONE: I have no object in putting the House to the trouble of a division. I have brought the matter forward and I know that it can only be dealt with by the Government. I beg to withdraw the Amendment.

The withdrawal being objected to,

The Question was put and agreed to

Main Question again proposed.

EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

*MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire) had upon the Notice Paper the following Amendment—

"That it is desirable to establish a national system of evening continuation schools where children who leave elementary day schools at a very early age may continue their education."

The Amendment however, could not be put.

The hon. Member said: I am sure that I have with me the sympathy of the great majority of the Members of this House, and that, if it had been possible to have taken a division, I should have had almost unanimous support. As it is I trust the expression of sympathy will have almost as much weight and authority as could be expressed by means of a division. For several years I have sought to bring this matter before the House and to take a division upon it, and, although I have been disappointed, the cause has ripened out of doors so rapidly that a much more favourable judgment can be hoped for now than would have been given a year or two ago. We have now the Report of the Royal Commission on Education which took a large amount of evidence on evening schools, and almost unanimously recommended the establishment of a national system of such schools. I will call attention to one or two paragraphs in the majority report as follows:—

"That the necessity of having some form of evening school for the purpose of fixing and making permanent the day school instruction is almost self-evident; and that it would be worth the while of the State to spend more money on such schools."

"That the evening school system should be thoroughly revised; that a special curriculum and special schedule of standards and subjects should be allowed, suitable to the needs of a locality, and that the local managers should be encouraged to submit such schedules to the Department for approval; that the provisions embodied in the code requiring all scholars in evening schools to pass in the three elementary subjects as a condition of taking up additional subjects should cease to be enforced, and that no superior limit of age should be imposed upon the scholars."

These were the views of the majority of the Royal Commission, but the minority enforced them in a much more copious manner, and they went much more fully into the question of evening schools. I state this to show how unanimously the Commission was in favour of establishing evening schools. Memorials and resolutions in favour of evening continuation schools have been received from school boards, education associations, trade unions, co-operative societies, friendly societies, chambers of commerce, teachers' associations, and working-men's clubs, colleges, trading associations, and societies engaged in educational work. There used to be an impression that the working-classes were not favourable to legislation of this kind because they desired to get their children to work as soon as possible. I am happy to say that now this feeling is entirely dispelled. I have been in communication for two or three years with many working-class leaders, who insisted strongly upon the necessity for establishing evening continuation schools. I have been in communication with most of the school boards in the country for the purpose of ascertaining the average age at which children left the elementary schools, and I have found it was about 12

in the towns and 11 in the rural districts. In some rural districts it was 10; in some towns 11; in Wolverhampton, with 97 per cent of the scholars it was 11 years six months. I was quite unprepared, when I entered upon this question, to find how young is the age at which our children's education is stopped. In London, where they insist on the sixth standard, for which we owe the School Board a debt of gratitude, the average age of leaving is 13 years, which was probably the highest average in the country. In 1886 of 2,500,000 presented for examination, only 128,000 were presented in standards 6 and 7; 265,000 in Standard 5; 455,000 in Standard 4. The greater proportion did not go beyond Standard 4; and diminishing numbers reached Standards 5 and 6. The fact is, the greater part of the children of this country do not go beyond Standard 4, while a smaller number go to the 5th, and only a small minority at present pass the 6th Standard. This is a miserable state of things. In place of boasting of our great educational progress, we ought to be thoroughly ashamed of it. Of course we are far ahead of what we were before 1870, but then we were in a state of heathen darkness. Our educational attainments are miserably poor when compared with those of Germany, Switzerland, and several other countries. Now what becomes of the little children? Hundreds of thousands of them leave school at the age of 10, 11, and 12. Do they get any further education? As far as I have been able to gather, only 4 per cent receive any further education at all; 96 per cent cease to be educated altogether at the age of 12 or younger, and soon forget most of what they learn. Before 1870 we had a system of night schools which worked well, and the Shaftesbury ragged schools did useful work; but the Education Act killed these; and last year the average attendance at evening schools in England and Wales did not exceed 30,000 children against 4,500,000 in the day schools. What becomes of this enormous mass of children after they have passed out of the day schools of this country, very poorly equipped for life, at the age of 11 or 12? I will quote a sentence, which puts the whole thing in a nutshell, from Dr. Paton, of Nottingham—

"First we build up at an immense expense a colossal system of primary education, and then see and allow the results of it to be very largely wasted and lost. Teachers speak dismally of the havoc to the fruit of their labours in the first two years after school is left. The garden which by daily culture has been brought into such an admirable and promising condition is given over to utter neglect; the money, the time, the labour bestowed upon it are lost. We cease to educate at the most important, most plastic, most receptive period of life."

These are the words of a man who has, I believe, given more attention to this subject than any other in England. Now, many of these children who leave school at the age of 11 or 12 fall into a mode of life which is simply deplorable. They almost live upon the streets, frequenting public-houses and low music halls, where they hear that which is trashy and often worse, and their chief education is the literature of crime. This is the sort of training many of these children get after leaving school; this is the chief cause of the social degradation and the shameful condition of our large towns. The condition of the lower tier of the population—the residuum—is a reproach to us. I have made an attempt at an estimate, and I believe this residuum falls little short of three millions. I believe we have nearly three millions of our population who are on the verge of pauperism, and who are more or less supported by charity. My hon. Friend near me says there are more, but that is my estimate. And what in the main produces this pauperized class, this disgrace of England, and which we have in far larger proportion than any other civilized nation in the world? I will give my judgment as that of one who has spent much of his life in work among them, and I say that neglect of children is the main cause. Of course, I know there are collateral causes, such as the wretched dwellings, drunkenness, the hard struggle for existence. There are many contributory causes, but the one that stands out beyond all others, and which accounts for most of the squalor, degradation, and wretchedness of the English poor is the shocking, the shameful neglect of children. We have a large class of parents in England who are little better than savages; they do nothing for their children; they prey upon them; they treat them as wage earners from the earliest years of their

life, and under the degrading influences that surround them these children sink into that state of heathenism in which a considerable part of our people live. There is no way of Christianizing, of civilizing them, except by the State putting them into schools and keeping them there as long as they can be kept. But we allow the children of the poorest class to leave our schools at 11 or 12 years of age, and then they pass through the education of the slums; they sink down into the same state of degradation as that in which their parents live, and in a few years become parents of another crop of the same destitute class, and create another generation of "the unemployed" in our large towns, for this class is always unemployed, and never will be anything else. How should they be anything else? They have never learned a trade; they have no means of living but by what they can pick up in the streets by odd jobs. By the time the children have grown up into youth they are hopelessly condemned to a life of poverty and degradation. We have let go the critical moment for changing their destiny; we have lost the period between 12 and 16 when the character is forming, and when education can be turned to good account, and to our shame we have let these evils repeat themselves from generation to generation. Let me quote a few lines from a writer who has spent his life working among this class and knows exactly what he writes—

"Year by year (says the Rev. Benjamin Waugh) from 70,000 to 80,000 London children pass out of elementary schools; of these, possibly, the half obtain *bonâ-fide* occupation. As for the rest—the poorer part, inhabiting, too, the more densely-populated quarters—there is nothing for them but the streets, and the almost certain life of a knave or a fool. It is probable that, every day, not less than 70,000 boys and girls are actually 'hob-jobbing' about, utterly helpless, until they hob-job into gaols, penitentiaries, and reformatories."

I think I know Liverpool well—I do not know London so well—and I can say this describes the state of things in Liverpool. There you may see thousands of these children from 10 to 16 years of age half-clothed, half-fed, screaming about the streets, selling newspapers or fuzees or doing any odd jobs. This is the condition of Liverpool as I have known it for thirty years, a veritable scandal to the country. When an American lands at Liverpool, the first thing he notices is the crowd of squalid, dirty children who swarm around him. Their number is far larger in Liverpool than anywhere in Europe, so far as I know it. An hon. Member says in New York you will find as many. That may be true, though it was not my experience, and if it be so, those are the children of the destitute emigrants who have landed there, the sweepings of European towns. I have travelled over almost the whole of America twice, and I can say that nowhere except in New York can you see a score of ragged begging children in the streets. I have travelled in most civilized countries, and have specially inquired into this subject, and I say you can pick up in Liverpool in a single day more of these ragged, dirty, neglected children than you can find in six months in any other civilized country. I have made a study of this question, and I have inquired very specially into the condition of things in Germany and Switzerland. Once before I told the House the results of my inquiry, but as there are now present many Members who did not hear me on a former occasion, I may be allowed to repeat something of what I have said. I went to Germany with the special object of inquiring into the subject. I went through the largest cities, I saw the best authorities on education, and I inquired specially into the condition of the children of the poor. I did not find in any city, not even in Berlin, any sign of the existence of this class of dirty, ragged, neglected children. And yet the average rate of wages is lower than in England, and the struggle for life is very severe. So perfect is their system of education, so thoroughly are the children looked after, that such a thing as the class of squalid, neglected children we are so familiar with does not exist. How is it that in the great German Empire, that in Switzerland and in Scandinavian countries, they have got rid of this pest, this social nuisance that afflicts our country? There are many causes, and one is germane to this question. I found all over Germany that attendance at school was compulsory, almost universally up to the age of fourteen for boys, and so regularly was this rule complied with, that the average attendance of those on the school books was 97 and 98 per cent, whereas our

average attendance in England is about 76 per cent. In one school I found 99 per cent of the children in actual attendance. This seems to us almost a miracle. I found there was no such thing as shamming and finding excuses to keep the children from school. If any parent did keep his child from school, he heard of next day, and, if not provided with a proper reason, he was liable to imprisonment within a week. Such is the law in Germany almost all over the Empire. The school teaching, too, is much better than in England; the teachers are of a higher class—a better taught class—than in England, and they occupy a higher social position. But what I especially want to call attention to is this—that I found in every large city a system of evening continuation schools, into which the children went when they left the day schools, and where attendance was generally compulsory, in most towns up to the age of 17. So thoroughly was this system carried out that I found, at the hotels in Dresden, waiters under the age of 17 had to give five hours a week out of their time to attend these continuation classes, and several of these youths were learning two foreign languages. I inquired how it was possible to get such a large attendance of children at night schools up to the age of 17, and I found it was carried out without friction; the people liked the system, and it worked wonderfully well and smoothly. The effect of it is you never see swarms of unruly children in the streets. The streets of the large towns are as quiet in this respect as an English country village at night; there is no noise of rowdy children such as we find in London, fighting, swearing, and using vile language. The child population attend the evening schools, and throughout Germany there is almost no pauper class. In 47 millions of people, and with great poverty among them too, the pauperized class and the professional tramp, such as we have here by the thousand, scarcely exists, and I believe this thorough system of education is the main cause of it. And now, the House may ask, what is the plan we propose to get hold of the children, and get them into the schools? If the House will permit me, I will briefly sketch out the plan we propose to submit at some future time. We, first of all, adopt the recommendation of the Royal Commission, that the age for leaving school in all cases shall be raised to 13. I regard that as one of the most important recommendations of the Royal Commission, and if that alone is carried out it will immensely improve the educational condition of the children in this country. Then we propose that the half-time age should be raised from 10 years to 11 years. In Germany the age for entering factories is 14, and that is also the case in Switzerland; only in some special cases is the working age lowered to 12. But in England we allow children to enter the factories and workshops for half-time at 10 years. It is high time, in my opinion, we raised the age to 11, and the full exemption age to 13. Enormous advantages would accrue from raising the exemption age. We shall prevent the hurry-scurry and scramble there is to push the children through the standards, and get them out of school as soon as possible. Our education is spoiled, to a large extent, by this terrible scramble to get up to the standard; but, if the exemption age is made 13, the Sixth Standard should be made obligatory. Experience has shown that the majority of children who attend regularly can pass it at the age of 12. Here, in passing, let me say I think we begin the education of our children rather soon, and that it is perhaps better to wait until a child is five or six years old than commence at the age of three or four, which is bad for the brain, the sight, and the health of the child. I have no objection to the Kindergarten system in infant schools. The opinion of the German authorities is that six or seven years of age is early enough to commence mental education; their principle is to begin later and continue longer. With us, everything is precipitated to meet the exigencies of poor parents. We propose to make the exemption standard the sixth, as it now is in London and elsewhere. But we know there are a great number of children who will not pass this at 13; and here comes the *crux* of the situation—What shall we do with the dull, the stupid children, poor and ill-fed, who cannot pass the Sixth Standard at the age of 13? Our proposal is to give two options—either to attend the day-school up to the age of

14, or to pass into the evening continuation school at the age of 13, and continue there until the age of 15 or 16, or until the equivalent standard is passed; and the standard will be there framed in a manner suitable to these dull children. We propose to say to the parent, "Your child has failed to pass the Sixth Standard; will you let him remain longer at the day school, or shall he go into the evening school?" I think, in the great majority of cases, the parents will prefer the evening school and have the advantage of his child's labour for part of the day. They will come to regard the evening school in the light of a relief from the day school. It will not appear to be harsh and tyrannous; it will be a kind of harbour of refuge into which children may go to escape the compulsion of the day school. We propose that when a child gets into the evening school he shall have a totally different treatment to that now pursued. Evening schools have, hitherto, been ruined by pedantry. The Education Department have laid down certain foolish rules about committing so many lines to memory every week, and other things which disgust the children who attend these schools, tired as they are with their day's work. They go to school at night to improve their intelligence, not to go through a course of verbal training. We have almost allowed our evening schools to be ruined by pedantic theories of educationists who have mistaken the object of the schools. We have gone on allowing the mass of the people to grow up deficient in intelligence, owing to the foolish regulations made by the Board of Education, without practical knowledge of the real wants of the working classes. I feel very strongly the folly of going on year after year in this hopeless, fruitless manner. We propose to make our evening schools as cheerful, as bright, and attractive as it is possible to make them. We can do much in this way to secure a large attendance; we will make it a recreative movement, so that children themselves will be delighted to attend; they shall be bright, cheerful, and attractive, with calisthenics, musical drill, handwork, object lessons, history and geography, taught in an interesting form, everything we can do to encourage and develop the training of eye and hand. We mean these schools to have a partially technical character; we wish to appeal to the eye and hand as well as to the mind. We hope to make the schools so attractive that very little compulsion will be required, or only for the first few weeks, and when the children get into the way of going to these schools, they will regard it as a great deprivation to be kept away from them. We wish to carry out the suggestions of Mr. Heller, who drew up the recommendations in the Minority Report of the Royal Commission, and allow a wide discretion in management, having no cut-and-dried system, but an elastic course of instruction adapted to the trade or industry of each locality. It would be ridiculous, for instance, to give in an industrial centre like Bradford and in a rural parish the same kind of teaching. It may be asked what are we going to do about Voluntary Schools? In regard to Board Schools there is no difficulty. We have the buildings, and the bulk of them are idle in the evening, and they might just as well be open as shut. Wherever there is a School Board a sufficient number of evening schools can be provided to meet all requirements, but in rural districts where there are no Board Schools there is some difficulty. I would propose that in the first instance we make evening schools obligatory only in Board Schools and optional in Voluntary Schools. I should be most happy if Parliament went further and made them obligatory upon Voluntary Schools, but in the present state of public opinion we can hardly take this step. I know there are many cases in which clergymen in rural districts have admitted the desirability of opening evening classes in Voluntary Schools and would welcome an Act of Parliament to compel the attendance of children in such schools during the winter months. Of course there is not the same danger from moral corruption in the country as there is in great towns, so if we fail for the first few years in developing the system freely in rural districts, yet we shall have done much by inaugurating the system in towns. I propose that these schools should only meet in the winter months, not in the summer, so as not to interfere with field labour; and I think that three nights in the week

would probably be sufficient in the earlier stages of the movement, probably two hours in the evening, or six hours during the week. Ultimately, perhaps, we might extend the hours. I should think the present scale of grants is and would be nearly adequate to support the schools. If I am mistaken in this, at all events a grant of 16*s.* or 18*s.* per head would, I am told, be sufficient to carry on evening schools where you have a large number of children. Of course, it is not necessary to open every Board School for the purpose, probably, one in four would be sufficient. Then arises perhaps the greatest of the difficulties, the creation of a staff; but I would not meet it by employing the day teachers, their work in the day is too severe to allow of it. But there are a good many retired teachers who would be willing enough and perfectly competent to conduct teaching in the evening for six hours in the week at a reasonable remuneration, and I think we might rely upon a considerable amount of voluntary teaching. But whether we secure voluntary teaching or not, I would follow the recommendation of the Minority Report of the Commission that it is not desirable that the head teacher of a day school should be required to undertake the charge of the evening school, and that the additional duty though not forbidden, should be rather discouraged especially in towns. Without committing myself to details I hope I have said enough to commend the scheme as a practical one. Knowing the sympathy and support it has received throughout the country, I am rather disappointed that I am unable to carry my proposals to the test of a Division. I believe that in this House there is a general approval of my scheme, and that if members were left to vote freely according to their preference I should have a large majority in my favour. I have had almost as much support from the other side of the House as from my own. I hope I may be allowed to mention that we have a Bill prepared and ready, and I hope that at an early date I shall be enabled to introduce it to the House. I trust then that the Government will see their way to permit that Bill to pass the Second Reading unopposed. It has been most carefully framed after years of consideration with the view of meeting every difficulty. I know that I can rely on the sympathy of several members of the Government, and especially on that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has always been an advocate of education. I well recollect the speech which the right hon. Gentleman delivered some years ago. Towards the close of it he spoke of the ladder provided by the State by means of which children were to climb up from the elementary schools to the universities. The right hon. Gentleman went on to point out that owing to the want of Continuation Schools the ladder had been left hanging in the air, and it was impossible for the children of the working classes to get on to the lowest rung. I appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government to help us in this matter. In doing so they will be conferring a great honour on themselves and performing a truly patriotic act. I believe that in passing an Act of the kind I have sketched the Government will double the value of our educational system, and do more for the cause of social reform than has been accomplished by any Measure passed since the great Act of 1870. I beg to thank the House for the patience and attention with which it has listened to me.

MR. HAYES FISHER (Fulham): I cordially concur in the Resolution which the hon. Member opposite placed upon the Paper, but I rather regret that the hon. Gentleman should have taken what I deem to be a somewhat too gloomy view of the present state of things, particularly with regard to parental responsibility. I cannot say that I entirely share his views on the subject of compulsion. But there are within the four corners of the Resolution many practical points which deserve the consideration of the Government, and it is to those points I wish to address myself, before my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council rises to reply, during the short time I shall occupy the attention of the House. It may be thought that too great a demand is made on the Department to which it would be necessary to go for the money to carry the scheme of the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) into operation. But I think, although we may not be able to satisfy altogether the requirements of the right hon. Member, we

may, nevertheless, do something between the maximum demands he makes and the minimum of other hon. Members, who, at the same time, are earnest friends of education, and are ready to do everything in their power to encourage any laudable effort in that direction. Now, what is the real evil that the resolution of the right hon. Member for Flintshire is intended to meet? The evil of our educational system is that it has failed, notwithstanding the enormous expenditure incurred, to fix the knowledge acquired by the children in their minds. The resolution of my hon. Friend is one way of stopping the mental and moral leakage of our children. It is incredible folly to spend £7,000,000 every year in pouring knowledge into the minds of our children, and then to refuse to secure for ourselves by a little additional expenditure the full value of our money. In London alone 80,000 children pass out of the schools every year, but only 4 per cent continue in any way a systematic education. If examined at the end of the first year those children will be found to have lost half their knowledge, in the second year to have lost two-thirds, in the third the whole of it will be found to have gone, while in the fourth year after leaving school it will be found that their minds are replete with the noxious garbage picked up in the purlieus of London. The Registrar General points out the vast number of people who have gone through the ordinary curriculum and yet are unable to write their names when they come to be married. Every one, after listening to the speech of my hon. Friend will admit that there is a practical remedy. Polytechnics and schemes for extending University lectures are splendid in themselves, but they have been designed rather to meet a different age of life altogether. What we want is to fill up the gap between the age at which children leave elementary education and the age at which they are capable of educating themselves and of getting some benefit from the science and art classes. The night schools are undoubtedly failures. No hon. Member will deny it. If it is denied, I would ask hon. Members to turn to the report of the Education Commissioners, where they will find over and over again evidence which points to the decay rather than to the advance of the evening school system. If they have not been such a failure in London as elsewhere, it is due to the efforts of the Recreative Evening School Association, by means of which so many people are struggling to educate the poorer parts of London. The Rev. Mr. Diggle, the Chairman of the London School Board has made this statement:—

"Throughout England and Wales only 32,000 scholars in night schools were qualified by attendance for examination. Of these, 4,138 were qualified in connection with the evening classes under the London School Board. It is satisfactory to notice that whilst elsewhere in England and Wales night schools are apparently either stationary or decreasing in number, the evening classes under the Board have been steadily increasing during the past year, and for some of this improvement, and for much valuable help, the Board are indebted to the energetic exertions of the Recreative Classes Association."

Why is it that evening classes are successful here and not in the country? The Recreative School Association have discovered that the failure in the system of night schools is owing to their not being attractive, and I agree that the great failure is due to the pedantry of the Board of Education. Perhaps hon. Members will not be prepared to go as far as I should in the direction of compulsion, but I believe it is generally agreed that the minimum exemption for half-time should be 11, and for whole time 13. But without imposing compulsion at all, the Education Department could do very much in carrying out our ideas in regard to the moral and physical development of the children. It may not be desirable to use any form of compulsion in order to secure the attendance of children at night schools, but short of that, the Education Department ought to offer every kind of attraction to induce the children to attend school voluntarily, and continue their education. What the Board can do has been well pointed out by the hon. Member for Flintshire, and I will only give one further illustration. What I would impress upon the Department is that they should carry into effect the recommendations contained in the Report of the Royal Commission. In order to show how impossible it is to fill our English schools at the present moment, let me take a case from the Commissioners' Report. The Report says:—

"We have endeavoured to find out the causes of this comparative failure, and we learn that, in the opinion of many witnesses, a chief cause is to be found in the insufficient encouragement of evening schools by the Education Department; and one of Her Majesty's Inspectors agreed, in the view that if the Government encouraged such schools with more liberal grants they would increase in number. We are told in particular that evening schools need more freedom in respect both of classification and of subjects of instruction. The Code makes it obligatory on evening schools earning a grant that they must be examined in the three elementary subjects. In like manner a girl cannot join the evening cookery class without making 24 attendances at the evening school, and without being presented for examination in the standard subjects. This requirement is said to deter many girls from attending the cookery classes."

What we ask from the Board of Education is greater freedom. I do not know whether my hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire is correct or not when he says that the present special grants are sufficient. At all events they might be divided among more subjects. At a Conference of the Recreative Evening Schools Association, held in this House, it was resolved—

"That the following subjects be added to the list of specific or class subjects in the Code;—(*a*) for girls—laundry work, household needlework, including making, mending, and (*b*) for boys—designing, modelling, wood-carving, or other hand work; (*c*) for boys and girls—drilling and calisthenic exercises, surgery, and such subjects, industrial and others, as in the opinion of the local managers, are rendered necessary by the special needs of the locality; that on the subject of cookery a grant of 2s. for 20 attendances be given, instead of 4s. for 40; that these subjects may be taught in classes irrespective of standards; that the present restriction of the number of additional subjects to two be abolished, and that instead of English being a necessary additional class subject, that the selection of such subjects be left to the local managers; that the three R's be no longer compulsory for those evening scholars who have passed the fourth standard or are over 13 years of age."

I do not feel disposed to take up the time of the House further, but I hope I may elicit many opinions from hon. Members sitting on both sides of the House. But I will most earnestly impress on the Vice President of the Council the desirableness of carrying into effect the recommendations contained in the Report of the Royal Commission, the folly of making the three elementary subjects compulsory, and the necessity for greater freedom. The local managers should have the option of submitting subject schedules to the Board, and I would even ask for more money, because I do not think that the present grants are sufficient. I trust that my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council, who I feel convinced concurs in the spirit of this Resolution, will be prepared to give practical effect to the opinion it expresses, which I believe to be that of the House generally. We may not be able to correct the evil under which we are suffering for the present generation, but we may do much to improve the mental and moral condition of their children, who will form the next generation.

*Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I do not think it needs any argument from any quarter of this House to impress the Government with the absolute necessity for taking this subject in hand without further delay. Of course, the Government may have some difficulty in dealing with the matter. It may be supposed that the Government will have to find more money in order to carry out the plan suggested by my hon. Friend; but that question, I think, has already been answered. We are now losing a great deal of money which is set apart for education simply because we do not spend a little more for the purpose of perfecting the system. I have had something to do with this question for some years. The hon. Member for Flintshire has referred to the memorials which have been sent to the Prime Minister and the Education Department. Those memorials have been most numerously signed by large and important bodies of men who are practically engaged in the work of education like our Board Schools and other educational establishments, and from other bodies who are engaged in trade. Perhaps I may be allowed to refer to some of the letters which have come into my possession, and here let me say that out of something like 4,000 different bodies who have been addressed on the subject, not more than seven or eight absolutely refused to sign the memorial, and even in those cases the refusal was only because there was a feeling that some of the details contained in the memorial could not be carried out, or they were not prepared to endorse them at the moment.

The secretary of a large Trade Society numbering nearly 30,000 members writes:—"I have got the petitions agreed to by my council and sent in as directed." Other large Trade Societies and a Society representing a considerable body of miners write in similar terms. Working mens' clubs all over the country have sent in Memorials. Almost every body appealed to has unanimously signed the Memorial, and only in a few cases has there been any hesitation about one or two details. I think that this fact ought to encourage the Government to take the matter in hand and see whether something cannot be done to push it forward. The unanimity which has been manifested in this House to night ought to encourage them for once to throw aside Party politics and agree upon something which is to benefit future generations. So far as compulsion is concerned I am afraid there are a great number of persons to whom compulsion is absolutely necessary, and although it is right and proper that a child should honour and obey his parents, yet it is also right that parents should do their duty by their children. If parents fail to do their duty the State ought to step in and compel them to do it. In a great majority of cases, no compulsion would be required, especially if a proper curriculum of education is provided. It will be my duty to-night to take the chair at a very popular institution in London—the Polytechnic. The way in which the children are attracted to that institution at the present moment and the way in which they are taught is perfectly marvellous. I have had the pleasure of going through the rooms and of seeing the system of education carried on there, and it was most gratifying to witness the large number of young persons who evince a desire to attend the evening classes. I am not quite sure that I am accurate, but, as far as I can remember, the Secretary told me that the applications to go into the school are much greater than the facilities for accommodation can make provision for. I went into one of the classes where lessons were being given on geography. The lessons were made as attractive as possible by the aid of the magic lantern, and I am perfectly satisfied that a considerable amount of sound and useful information can be given to children in a way to excite their interest and attention. If we can by any means provide something in our schools that will be attractive to the children, and keep our boys and girls away from the music halls and other haunts—I was going to say of vice—but at any rate where vice abounds, I think we shall have done a great deal of good. The most important thing is to keep the children under good influences between the ages of 12 and 16 or 17. When they leave school at about 12 or 13 years of age and go back to poverty-stricken homes, in some cases where vice is in the ascendant, how is it possible for a child to resist the evil influences that are brought to bear upon him? Keep the child under the influences of school for two or three years longer, and you will find that the better side of his nature becomes trained so that he is able to resist the evil influences even of a bad father and mother. I know plenty of instances where it is being done now. Cases have come under my own knowledge where the drunken habits of the parents have been resisted by the voluntary abstinence of the children, and where the children have left home and gone into other institutions of their own accord. I think we should do something to encourage that state of things all over the United Kingdom. I am quite in favour of extending the age of children in elementary schools, but I would not curtail the age. In very many cases the school-house is a much brighter and more comfortable place than the home, and I am in favour of getting them there at the earliest possible moment. The hon. Member for Flintshire spoke of Liverpool as a town with which he is better acquainted than London. I know both towns very well, but London much better than Liverpool; and I must say that of all the towns where it is necessary for something to be done it is this great Metropolis, with its nearly five millions of inhabitants. I am quite prepared to pay tribute to the London School Board for having done its best, under difficult circumstances, to give encouragement to voluntary education, and to bring the children into the schools. I sincerely trust that the Government, if they cannot see their way to bring in a measure themselves, will support any measure that may be brought in by the hon. Member for

Flintshire, so that something may be done this Session to commence this great work.

*Sir R. TEMPLE (Worcestershire, Evesham): I rise once more to pay my tribute of approbation to the philanthropy of the hon. Member for Flintshire. I have done it so often that hon. Members may think I am painting the lily. Nevertheless, I entreat the House to remember that, although there is a general consensus of opinion upon the abstract propositions of the hon. Member for Flintshire, the statements which have been made are of an academic character, and that a certain amount of practical application is necessary. Therefore, with the permission of the House, I propose for a few moments to offer a running commentary upon the remarks of the hon. Member from a Metropolitan point of view. The hon. Gentleman said that he would not attempt to press the Resolution to a Division. I am afraid that, however he might feel disposed, he could not do so under the Rules of the House. Nobody, however, challenges the expression of opinion contained in the Resolution. The hon. Member says that it is desirable to establish continuation schools all over the country. I suppose that nobody denies that proposition. It is one of those propositions which nobody can deny. To the various Memorialists mentioned by the hon. Member I would say, "If that be your opinion, why do not you act up to it?" Now, I am thankful to the proposer and seconder of the Resolution for the tribute they paid to the efforts made by the London School Board. The fact is that while outside society is memorializing, and the House is debating, the London School Board is acting: we are men of action. There may be some Boards who are not doing as much as they ought. I have no objection to the hon. Member's (Mr. S. Smith's) strictures being addressed to them, but I do claim exemption on behalf of that great Corporation which I have the honour to represent, the London School Board. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) said that for a long time the evening classes in London, as elsewhere, were failures. That description cannot be applied to the evening classes which now exist. The evening classes in London are not all they might be, but they are already something very considerable, and therein I gladly acknowledge the assistance and co-operation we have received from the various societies which are promoting evening classes. Reference has been made to the term "education." Let me ask hon. Members what is meant by education? I am sure some listeners would gather from the speeches of certain hon. Members that the speakers think education consists in the imparting of knowledge, and that such knowledge as is afforded by the system of elementary education may pass in at one ear and go out at the other. That may be, but I am anxious to remind hon. Members that education does not consist of knowledge alone. There are in our elementary system influences of a moral character; there are the disciplinary and humanizing influences and the recollections of our school buildings in contrast to the misery and degradation of some of the children's homes. These things are not forgotten—they last as memories through life. Then the hon. Member for Flintshire said a great deal about our children running wild about in the streets. What he said may be very true as regards the evening, but I submit it is not correct as regards the day. Judging from the hon. Gentleman's speech, one would suppose that the children of the Metropolis are running wild about the streets at all hours of the day. That is really not the case, and I am sure the hon. Gentleman will admit it, because in the very next breath he spoke of children being treated too much as wage earners. If it is so, it is impossible that the children can be running about the streets in the day time. It is the fact that children are apt to run about wild in the evening, and this is one of the greatest of the many reasons for the establishment of continuation classes. Again, the hon. Gentleman spoke of parents being neglectful of their children. There is unquestionably another side to the question. There are parents who are neglectful, but there are others who pay attention to their children in a manner which makes them examples to all classes of society, and these parents are to be found amongst the very poorest classes in the Metropolitan area. It is my duty to constantly inspect the children of the poorest classes in the poorest schools in the poorest parts of the Metropolis, and I am therefore able to

declare that for one mother who neglects her children there are scores who manage somehow or other to send their children decently to school. Mothers who themselves are starving manage somehow to keep their children in something like physical condition; women hardly able to afford decent clothing for themselves contrive to send their children respectably clad to school. Only this week I have seen, in the poorest parts of London, cases which came under the category. Such parents certainly deserve every praise which can be bestowed on them. The hon. Member seemed to think that in London and in our great industrial centres the children are uncared for, and he alluded to the care taken of children in Berlin. Any outsider listening to the hon. Gentleman would suppose that little or nothing has been done in London to bring the children into the educational fold. Will the House be surprised to hear that at this moment, within the Metropolitan area, there is a house-to-house visitation, so that no child of any class, sort, or condition of life can possibly escape education? Every child is accounted for. Even the children who sleep out under arches are brought up before a Committee of the Board and sent either to a reformatory or an industrial school or a truant school. There is not a child who escapes going to school so many times a year. What is the average attendance? More than four-fifths—more than 80 per cent—so it is really not just to our countrymen, and to our organization, to indirectly imply that the children of the humbler classes are uncared for. Then, the hon. Member drew moving pictures of the sorrows and the miseries of England, and attributes them all to the want of education. I am sure the House will say that the statement of the hon. Gentleman was tinged with exaggeration. ["No, no!"] If it was not, the hon. Gentleman's remedies, the extension of the age of compulsion from 11 to 13 years, and the establishment of continuation classes for children up to 14 and 15 years, are very small remedies for such a wide-spread and deep-seated a disease. Either the disease is exaggerated or the remedy is insufficient. Then, the hon. Member spoke in very complimentary terms of the elementary school teachers in Germany, and drew, as I understood him, a comparison between the German teachers and the teachers in England generally, somewhat unfavourable to the latter. But the hon. Gentleman is not the only Member of the House who has travelled. I am myself a traveller—perhaps a greater one than he; and I assert that our teachers—certainly those in London and in great centres like Liverpool and Birmingham—are a very highly trained and competent body of people. Our teachers, whether male or female, have a great deal of force of character, power to command, and aptitude for enforcing discipline which cannot be surpassed by the teachers of any nation in the world. After all these very powerful descriptive passages the hon. Gentleman proceeded to develop his plan, which really amounts to this—that the period of compulsory attendance should be somewhat prolonged, and that every child should be obliged to pass a higher standard than that which is now made obligatory. Neither I nor any educational authority would have any objection to these proposals, provided only that the people will stand them. I understood the hon. Gentleman to say that while parents on the Continent of Europe are willing to let their children remain at school for a long time without earning wages, British parents insist upon their children earning wages at a tender age. Now, in justice to my country, I should like to point out that, with respect to the labour of women and children in factories, England compares most favourably with all other nations.

Mr. MUNDELLA: Not children.

SIR R. TEMPLE: I speak subject to correction, but that is certainly my impression. Then the hon. Gentleman spoke of our infant schools in terms of disparagement. He seemed to think that children ought not to go to school till five years of age. It is commonly admitted all over London that the infant schools, in which children are brought into training from three to five years of age, are the means of diffusing a blessing upon the people. The infant schools are very popular with the parents. My right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) will admit it is far more easy to induce universal attendance between three and

five years of age than it is in the subsequent period of life. I am sure that if the hon. Member for Flintshire were to inspect some of our Infant Schools in London, see the little children going through their Kindergarten exercise, and notice the tender maternal care taken of the children by the head and assistant mistresses, he would admit that our Infant School system is one of the jewels in the educational crown. Then the hon. Member alluded to the standard to be followed for evening classes. I heartily agree with him although here again I think he spoke in somewhat too severe terms of what he called the pedantry of the Education Department. He thinks the curriculum is unattractive. That is admitted to be the case by every person who has had anything to do with the matter, but on previous occasions I have stated in the House that the School Board of London is not at all at fault. We find ourselves hampered by the regulations of the Educational Code and have repeatedly drawn the attention of the Education Department to the matter and prayed for relief. We were told relief could not be afforded pending the Report of the Royal Commission. That Report has been presented; we are still without relief, but we trust that the New Code will enable us to make our classes thoroughly attractive. But when the hon. Member for Flintshire spoke in such interesting and eloquent terms of the singing, calisthenics, musical drill, and the like, I thought he was drawing a picture of what is going on at this moment under the School Board for London. This special instruction is actually being given all over London. Inasmuch as allusion has been made to my late colleague, and still my friend, Mr. Heller, may I inform the House that he was for many years Chairman of the Evening Classes Committee under the London School Board. Something has been said about the cost of the evening classes not exceeding 15s. per scholar. I think that is certainly sufficient; the work is being done now in London for that sum. More than half the cost is received from fees, and that receipt is to us a very essential part of the system. I apprehend the hon. Member for Flintshire would put the whole charge on the public, either upon the rates or the Treasury, or upon both in combination. The hon. Gentleman made a very pertinent inquiry. How is the staff to be provided? He rather deprecates the ordinary day school teachers being employed in the evening schools, but may I remind him that by so employing the day school teachers, we effect a great economy, and economy, surely, is a very essential element in the calculation. It is a most expensive thing to employ teachers for this work alone; besides, I cannot admit it is impossible for day school teachers to do the work. The work for the teachers in Board Schools is not excessive. ["Oh, oh!"] It begins at 9 o'clock and goes on till 12 o'clock; then there are two hours' recess, and afterwards the school is open from 2 to 4.30, possibly on some occasions to 5 o'clock. [Mr. PICTON: Then there is evening work and preparation of pupil teachers.] The preparation of pupil teachers has nothing to do with the matter, in London at least, and considering the elementary nature of the instruction and high educational qualifications of the teachers, it is not a fact that the teachers have much in the way of preparation over night to undergo. As a matter of fact, many teachers do give private instruction in the evening. I assure the House we shall not find the slightest difficulty in getting clever and physically strong young teachers, both male and female, to take charge of the evening classes, and in this way saving a great deal of money to the public revenue. Lastly, I must urge the question of finance. At present our educational charges are as large as the people can bear. The school rates and taxes are becoming highly unpopular, and there is the greatest danger that if the rates are enlarged to any appreciable extent, education may become unpopular and a great movement put back. I entreat all friends of the evening class system to try to make the cost as small as possible. We, educational men, thoroughly recognise the soundness of principles enunciated to-night—namely, that instruction should not end at 12 or 13 years of age, but that a child having learned not only knowledge but moral discipline—having also been educated in habits of thrift and temperance—may come under the beneficial influence of continuation classes for a certain number of evenings in the course of the year.

*SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): The hon. Member for the Evesham Division (Sir Richard Temple) commenced by saying he was about to paint the lily; but I think, before he ended his speech, he had so besmirched the lily that there was little of its lustre left. He endeavoured to show that my hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) had brought forward an impracticable or useless scheme. I quite agree that we must take care to satisfy the country that the proposed expenditure will not be wasted. But what my noble Friend and those who support him contend, is, that the expenditure of the country upon education which is now getting very large, is an unproductive expenditure, that we are wasting a large portion of our expenditure by not continuing the education of our children when they leave our elementary schools with a taste for further knowledge; that the little knowledge they gain is quickly rubbed off in the wear and tear of life, and is of little use in their future career. My hon. Friend contends that unless you proceed with the children's education you are wasting the treasure and resources of the nation. I recollect years ago, when we first began to seriously take up the question of education in the House in 1870, and for years afterwards, we found that very few indeed—not 30,000—children went into the higher Standards and received an education that was capable of being continued in after life, and experience showed that unless a child passed Standard 4, in a few years amid the wear and tear of life, the whole value of education was gone. But do not let us depreciate what we have done. Since then we have done a great deal in education. Very few children now pass through our schools who do not pass the Fourth Standard, which, in all towns except Bradford, is now the standard for labour. Do not let us depreciate what we have done since 1870; we have done much. But we have still a great deal left to do. As my hon. Friend has shown by statistics, the great bulk of the pupils come out of the schools at the age of 12, and I would ask hon. Members to consider what knowledge our children would possess in our own position of life, and with the advantages we have, if they were turned out at 12 years of age to take part in the battle of life. Even with our own children there would be but miserable armour of knowledge for the struggle; but what can the children of the poorer classes get at 12 years, but a thin veneer of learning that, unless continued and strengthened, can be of little effect in after life? It is because our educational expenditure is unproductive, because so much of it is wasted; it is in order that the children we have taught up to the age of 12 may continue their education that Evening Schools, Science and Art Classes, and Technical Schools are proposed. I do not wish to pose as a prophet, but in the discussions upon the Bill of 1870 I pointed out that the night schools would become a complete failure under the Act, because they were designed to give elementary instruction to neglected children, but gradually as your children became educated night schools ought to have been made higher schools, useful and attractive continuation schools, where children could learn the use of hand and eye in preparation for pursuing the industrial arts of life. We did not do that; and the night schools went dragging on in a system of mere verbalism, which the children do not care for and find no advantage in, and now are in the miserable condition of having an attendance of only 30,000 in all England. I have always regretted the division between the Scotch and English educational systems, because Scotland does not get the advantages England has, nor England the advantages of Scotland. So completely separated are the two Administrations that here in England you do not know what is going on in Scotland. What has been done there with night schools is, they have been converted into higher schools, and the result is that the attendance bears that proportion to population that 60,000 or 70,000 would represent in England. I support the Resolution of my hon. Friend, and do so in a much broader sense than he does. I think continuation schools are excellent if you have the sense to make them attractive to the growing intelligence of youth, for the training of hand and eye unencumbered by verbalism, opening two new gates of knowledge—sight and touch. They make the scholar very much more intelligent, and much more useful in life;

but more than that, I look upon these schools as the means of inducing children to go still further; that they should not lose their time, but go on to the Science and Art Schools—supported with so much expenditure and with so much usefulness—and the Technical Schools of the future. And here I would like to ask the Vice President what has happened to the Technical Education Bill which has been mentioned in two Queen's Speeches, and which we are all anxious to see become a reality? For three years a Technical Education Bill has been before the House, and twice it has been promised in the Speech from the Throne, but we do not yet know what particular Bill is to be laid before us. As leading to the Science and Art Schools, and the Technical Schools, I want to see these continuation schools established. I regard this as a matter of urgent national interest. We see competing nations spending their treasure to a far greater extent than we are, and spending it without stint, to create a trained intelligence among their workmen. We are not accustomed to rely on all expenditure from the central authority, nor do I know that Technical Education should rely on State support, but we ask the Government to show us how they will allow localities to spend for themselves as well as what aid they will give in order that our present educational expenditure may not be wasted, as now it is, in part from want of these schools. With this view I thoroughly support the Resolution of my hon. Friend, only considering it a road to a much higher and more important education, which will put us in a position to give that intelligent training to our working classes which will enable them to keep their position in the competition of the world.

*Mr. YOUNG (Christchurch): I ask the indulgence of the House not only because this is the first time I have trespassed on its time, but because I have had something to do with boys in the early years after they have left school, and also because I may express views upon this question that may not meet with great favour in any quarter of the House. I have nothing to say against the principle of evening schools; everyone, I suppose, is convinced that when our children leave school at twelve or thirteen years of age their education is by no means complete, and I would be prepared to agree with the hon. Member for Flintshire in extending the time of compulsory attendance at day schools to thirteen years. But that is not the point we are discussing to-night. I believe that these continuation schools would do much to give a higher education to our children, that they would enable that education to be completed, and I am quite prepared to admit that between the ages of 13 and 16 is just the time when the mind begins to expand and to appreciate the instruction offered. No doubt, to a certain extent, higher education has been neglected in this country, and, in consequence, foreign nations have been running us close if they have not been outstripping us in the industrial race. But what I do object to in the terms of the hon. Member's Resolution is the use of the word "National." I am quite aware of the importance attached to this by many hon. Members, who think that not only elementary but higher education should be controlled, supported and directed by the State. But I must protest against the unlimited adoption of this principle in regard to higher education without very careful consideration. We know very well the large appetites of many hon. Members and of some right hon. Members, too, for the expenditure of public money for educational purposes, and as a "National system of evening continuation Schools" means in the first place a system supported by the State we may well ask with some alarm what limit is to be put upon this doctrine of National support? Whatever the state of our National finances may be, I think, we ought to pause before taking action that may tend to check the responsibility of parents for the education of their children, and discourage those voluntary agencies which have done a certain amount of good in the past and are now doing a great deal more to supply what is lacking in this respect. Education is a very important matter, no doubt, but there are many other important and necessary things not provided by the State; food, clothing, shelter, medical attendance, these are all matters of primary importance, but individuals are left to obtain them for themselves and their families, or to get them from those who will sup-

ply them. No doubt, an exception was made in the case of elementary education, but I do think we ought to pause before extending that principle to an indefinite degree. As a matter of fact these evening schools as has been pointed out by the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Temple) do exist to a great extent, and what exists in London may very well be extended to other large towns in the country, and, indeed, it is admitted on high authority that there is hardly a large town where Technical Schools do not exist, and where provision is not made for education in science under the Science and Art Department. It may be true that the ordinary night schools are not so well attended as they might be, or so well as they were attended some years ago. Why? I should like to quote Dr. Paton who has already been referred to by the hon. Member for Flintshire, and he is an authority who I know will be respected by those who take an interest in this subject. He was examined before the Royal Commission on Elementary Education, and he said the whole system of education at the day schools was such as to deter boys from attending evening schools, and when they have passed the exemption standard they fling up their caps and cry, "Catch me going to school again!" It is the principle of compulsion to which I take principal objection in reference to this Motion. It has been introduced in the case of elementary education, and there are a good many people who think it has not been altogether a success. You have a gigantic staff to compel attendance at a cost of £30,000 a year in London, and there is an opinion, that has penetrated even the London School Board itself, that this compulsion has not been worked altogether satisfactorily, and has not been productive of the happiest results; and now you propose to extend this principle to children of more advanced age, whom it would be still more difficult to bring into school. We may be asked to look at the Continent, and, of course, we there see the compulsory principle introduced. Why, there is one place where the lads working in a large factory for 12 hours' daily are made to attend evening school up to the age of 18, but I should like to know whether the people of this country are disposed to sanction the introduction of such a principle on any large scale here? I do not believe they would, and I should be sorry if they were. It is all very well to refer us to the Continent, but I do not think we are bound slavishly to imitate Continental models when we know that our habits and character are so very different from those of other nations. I think it would be a fatal mistake to adopt a system of compulsion in higher schools just because it has been adopted and been found to answer among other nations. Boys leave school now, say, at the age of 13, and most of them go to work of some kind, and some of them work long hours; they come home tired in the evening and want rest. Now, set up classes for these boys which shall be bright and attractive, and invite them to come in, and you may be doing them a benefit just at the time when it will be most advantageous to them. But compel them to attend, and you make that distasteful if not odious to them, which should be a pleasure and a boon; you are cramming them with knowledge with the effect very often of permanent injury to the health; you may possibly turn out a very superior wage-earning machine, but it is at the expense of all the higher qualities of the man—and the woman too. I may seem 20 years behind the time, perhaps, but I believe I express the opinion of a certain number of the working classes and of a good many of the already over-burdened tax and ratepayers, and some of the best friends of education, who will agree with me when I say that the cast-iron method of thrusting knowledge down the throats of the people is not the real way to promote the cause of education in the highest sense—that, however important it is to have the working classes instructed in science and art, as well as the ordinary branches of knowledge, there is another side to their nature which ought not to be left out of account—and that by this constant and evergrowing interference on the part of the State in matters of individual and family concern, you are doing your best to destroy that spirit of freedom, self reliance, and self respect which have helped to make our nation what it is.

*MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I have felt it my duty to make many visits to schools in manufacturing

towns, and I have given some attention to this subject. If the hon. Member for Flintshire will allow me to express an opinion, I think he takes too gloomy a view of the condition of our town population. I do not believe he exaggerates in the slightest degree the condition of things in the town of Liverpool, and I confess as a Lancashire man I look with the greatest regret and the deepest sorrow on the condition of Liverpool. The reason for it I think is not far to fetch. You have in the great city of Liverpool no occupation for girls or women. If you pass from Liverpool to one of our great manufacturing towns, say Wigan or Bolton, you find the whole of the population that in Liverpool would be running about the streets, a source of anxiety and discredit to all, are in Wigan and Bolton occupied day after day in the great factories of those towns. I do not think that anything is gained by exaggeration in this matter. I believe on the contrary, that a cause is greatly weakened when statements are made which do not stand the test of severe examination. I do not believe myself—the hon. Member for Flintshire will pardon my friendly criticism—that there are three millions of people in the country on the edge of pauperism; I cannot think that a tenth of the entire population of England and Wales are at the door of the workhouse. I think in that as in his more general statements the hon. Member is not supported by facts, and in his inferences has gone beyond the truth. With reference to the popular opinion in favour of some movement of this kind, there was one omission in the speech of the hon. Member for Flintshire. During the last few weeks an important and representative body of churchmen, who met to consider how the National Church can best discharge its duties, passed an emphatic Resolution in favour of a system of continuation schools. I think it is only due to my co-religionists to say what they are doing in that particular. I think the real argument in favour of the hon. Member's proposition is that laid before the House by the right hon. Member for Leeds (Sir L. Playfair). We have a gigantic machine, a system of the most elaborate character, teachers trained with the greatest care and accomplished in their art; we have millions of children gathered together, and yet we allow them to be removed from this most careful and elaborate method of instruction just at the time when they are beginning to take advantage of it. Of this there is no doubt, and the more the case is rested on this argument the more it will be supported and the more speedily the matter will be settled. I do not in the slightest degree believe that the education of our young children begins too soon. It is a delusion to think that the infants collected in the schools are subjected to a painful process of instruction until their lives are made unhappy and school hours a period of misery. On the contrary the years spent at school are happy years, and the hours passed in our schools are hours of enjoyment to young children and among the happiest hours of a child's life. I need not describe the scene in an infant school as I have often witnessed it; anyone who cares to do so can visit a school, and after he has done so I am sure he will agree with me. But the real difficulty is the age at which children leave school, and I may mention a remarkable circumstance which has a bearing upon this point. It is a fact that now in some of our manufacturing towns children pass through the standard which gives them exemption from school attendance at so early an age that they are not allowed to enter upon factory labour. This is the almost incredible condition of things, and shows how machinery does occasionally get out of order. The effect is that many of these children pass 12 months or more in a condition of idleness: the bye-laws of the School Board cease to have effect, because the standard is passed, but the Factory Act remains in operation, and the boy is not permitted to work. So children idle away a year or more of the most precious years of their life, because parents are unwilling to continue sending them to school, and compulsory attendance has ceased. Another fact to be borne in mind is the great reluctance of magistrates to enforce the bye-laws when a parent who does not attend as he ought to the education of his child is summoned before the magistrate by the School Board or School Attendance Committee. The mother comes forward with a story not always true, which excites sympathy, the case is dismissed, and thus the efforts

of the school authorities to secure attendance are discouraged. Night schools have comparatively failed, and some years ago I had a correspondence with some clerical friends, who expressed regrets in regard to the decay of these schools which were fast ripening into despair. They have been conducted in a half-hearted fashion, rather to the prejudice than the advantage of education. They have failed, because of the nature of the subjects taught; because successive Governments have made injudicious requirements, and because of the difficulties of securing an efficient teaching staff. I confess I do not think we can expect day school teachers to add night teaching to the labours of the day. In the case of London I believe teachers in elementary schools are free from the necessity of instructing pupil teachers. In my judgment, to require a teacher who has been at work during school hours to also instruct pupil teachers is to subject these teachers to an excessive amount of pressure. Whether you can supply deficiencies by means of a voluntary staff, or whether you might accomplish your object by exempting teachers from half their day labour when they engage in night school teaching, I will not venture to say, but I do say that it is quite impossible for teachers to do both, and there should be no attempt to induce a teacher to conduct a night school as well as a day school. As to compulsion, I confess that my opinion—an opinion formed, with considerable regret, under the pressure of observation—is that we are at the edge of a period when there will be an objection to compulsion on the part of parents, just as there has been a reluctance on the part of magistrates to carry the compulsory law into effect. I deeply regret so retrograde a condition of public opinion. Some years ago I embarked in an education campaign with a strong feeling against compulsion. I argued against it before large gatherings of working men, and I found, to my great surprise, that my arguments were not well received by the working men. I arrived at the conclusion on which I have acted ever since—namely, that working men are in favour of compulsion, and that it is our duty to press on them in a friendly spirit that which they believe to be, and that which we know to be, an advantage and boon to them. That being the case, I think we ought to be very careful lest we press the movement too far. I do not think it would be prudent in the interest of the continuation schools to make them compulsory. There are two difficulties which meet; and the first one is the fatigue of young persons after the day's labour. Sometimes the school may not be near the home—it may be very far distant. Some of the factory workers walk a considerable distance to their factories, because the labour of the household is not exclusively factory labour, and the young persons have to seek their livelihood as best they can, often at a distance from home. And, secondly, you have that which I believe to be a most valuable duty on the part of our young girls, and that is, assisting in the management of the household. That I always regard as a technical education of the most valuable character, and I do not think the House will act with wisdom—and I am sure it would not act with mercy and consideration—if it were to pass a compulsory law to prevent the young women of our working classes from assisting their mothers in the management of the home. I think, Sir, these remarks are quite sufficient to show that the time for compulsion has not yet come, and that we ought to be most tender and careful how we advance in that direction. There is one further remark I would make, and that is that I do not think that sufficient recognition has been given to work actually done. If you come to our town—I am speaking now of the North of England, with which, by this time, I hope I have some acquaintance—you will find that some of our schools are well occupied at night. You will find various classes under various names to young boys and young women. Sometimes there is a certain degree of technical education, sometimes there is some debating society, sometimes there is some music taught of a more or less valuable character, sometimes there are lectures given on subjects of deep interest, and, altogether, there is far more to continue education given to these young persons as they become more advanced in life than might be thought by some who have not carefully investigated the subject. There is one other point in which I think we do indulge in too much depreciation

and that is, when we do not fully acknowledge the abilities of our teachers. I believe we have in the teachers of our elementary schools a most splendid class, both of men and women. I ought to know something of them, having to do not only with schools, but also with some of our great training institutions; and I believe, if there is any class more than another which is elevated by a sense of duty and who pass their lives in devotion to their work, it is the elementary teachers of this country. I am quite sure that those who conduct this education in the training colleges are most anxious to develop that education in such manner as the country may require. It was only the other day I had an opportunity of making inquiry from a gentleman who is competent to give advice on such a matter, and he said that he feels assured that our training colleges at this moment are in such a state that it would be easy to engraft upon them any amount of technical education that the Government might propose. I feel we are indebted to the hon. Gentleman opposite for bringing this matter before the House. The discussion will have been of service, not only to the cause but to the country, and though to-night no definite result may arise from the Motion owing to the rules of the House, yet the cause is being advanced, the way is being prepared, and the day is coming when a definite result will follow and be a great benefit to those whom we desire to advance by these discussions and these organizations.

*Mr. GEO. DIXON (Edgbaston, Birmingham): I thank the hon. Member for Flintshire for the admirable manner in which he brought before the House the subject of evening schools, and I listened with the greatest pleasure to the speeches which followed. There have been criticisms upon matters of detail, and upon some side issues, but it is quite evident that, upon the main point, the House, so far as can be gathered, is in favour of the Motion. But it is not merely this accidental debate in the House of Commons which shows the progress which this question has made. We have been told by those who ought to know that in the country there is a strong feeling in favour of the establishment of these evening schools—in fact, that the feeling is unanimous. Now, Sir, as having long been connected with School Boards and their management, and as having been chairman of a School Board in one of the largest provincial towns, I may claim to have a practical knowledge of this important question, and of the difficulties in the way of carrying out our wishes. That difficulty lies exclusively with the Education Department. By a slight alteration in the Code, the power which is now sought for could be given in a moment. The Education Department would willingly make the alteration I believe; I believe it desires it, but behind the Department is the Treasury. And it is the duty of the Head of the Treasury to resist the expenditure of the public funds unless the strongest possible case is made out. Now, I do hope the Treasury will come to the conclusion that the strongest case is made out, a case sufficiently strong for them to act, when there is such evidence as has been brought before the House to-night, and when you find that the working classes, who are seriously affected, are the most anxious to have this alteration. Now, what is the alteration required in the Code, in order that our object may be attained. At the present moment the Code insists that is is essential that children attending the evening schools should be taught the Standards, and unless they are they cannot be taught any additional subject. None of those subjects in the Science and Art Department which they are so eager to learn, can be learnt unless they go through the drudgery of learning the three "R's," which in many and the most important cases they have already learnt in the elementary schools, and are perfectly familiar with. Now, Sir, if that condition were to be withdrawn from the Code, our wishes would be granted. We ask for no more additional contributions from the State than those claimed from the Science and Art Department. No doubt we should be glad to have additional grants, and we shall hereafter ask for them. There is at the present time a literally burning feeling in favour of giving that kind of teaching which educates the hand and eye in the use of tools. All desire that. And, if that were given in evening schools, there would be no grant for it. But while we should be glad to have

that grant, it is not so essential as what we have asked for—that the simple alteration should be made in the Code of not insisting upon children who attend evening schools going through standards which many of them have already learnt. I believe the reason why this condition has not been withdrawn is because the Education Board has not become fully sensible of the fact that the country desires its withdrawal. The working men are very desirous of having these night schools, and are anxious that when the manufacturers receive young persons into their works they should insist on their going to night schools, so that they might learn the art or science connected with their trade. But there are no such schools to go to, and therefore the working men and the Trades Unions insist on the necessity of establishing them. We have one very good school in Birmingham, but our large towns are extending over such enormous areas that one school does not suffice. We have established recreation classes, but they do not cover the ground, and we are obliged to rely to a great extent, if not mainly, on volunteers, who, for the most part, are ladies and gentlemen who have not had experience of the work, and who have to be trained to it; and who, when they have acquired knowledge and ability, find their task so enormous a strain upon them that they may fall away We consequently have no confidence in the continuance of these voluntary efforts. In the legitimate demand we are now making we have behind us the whole of the people of this country, and I do not see how the Government or the Education Department can justify resistance to it. If the School Board be not the proper body to entrust the power to, then let the power be given to some other body. What we want is that the thing should be done. My own impression is that if the power were given to the School Board by a simple alteration of the Code we should find that the local authorities would promote these schools to a very large extent, and in a very few years experience will show what the wants of the community may be. The expenditure at the commencement would be comparatively small. The Government would be afraid of any great addition to the general cost of education; but I would urge on the Government the importance of this question of increased education to the working classes, believing that the cost, even if it were for the moment to appear great, would be trifling compared with the enormous advantages that would be derived. The working men earnestly beg that you will supply them with that educational help which they have not hitherto been able to get. This has been from no default on their part; it is because the schools have not been there for them to send their children to. When a boy leaves an elementary school at 13 years of age he has not acquired any knowledge of the art or science of the work he will have to do in after life; of this he knows almost nothing, and in many cases absolutely nothing; and the parents all say, "Let us have the means of sending these children to a night school, where they can get the information they require." It is not necessary that they should go every night in order to acquire this technical education; attendance two nights a week for a couple of hours would be sufficient. I trust that, whatever he may do in connection with this important matter, the right hon. Gentleman will receive from me the assurance that, in any steps he may take in this direction, he will have the whole of the people of the country enthusiastically behind him.

*MR. J. G. TALBOT: I think that every Member of this House, without distinction of Party, has every reason to be thankful to the hon. Gentleman who has brought this important question forward, and in the few remarks I shall offer I desire to express a general approbation of the Resolution. I am very glad that this debate will not end in a Division, because, if it were, my right hon. Friend below me might have felt himself compelled to have voted against it, lest the Government might otherwise have been committed to this particular course. The hon. Gentleman who introduced this discussion has referred to the recommendations of the Royal Commission upon which I had the honour of sitting last year on this subject. Now, in my opinion, there is considerable necessity for caution with regard to compulsion in conncection with attendance at night schools. As to the necessity of continuing education after the usual school age there cannot be two

opinions, and all the hon. Members who have spoken have agreed on that point. The difficulties are two: first in regard to compulsion, and then in regard to expense. Compulsory evening classes would be especially objectionable in the rural districts. For my own part, I am strongly in favour of every encouragement being given to the establishment of evening classes; but I think that the principle of compulsion ought not to be applied. There are two chief objections to these schools being made compulsory, especially in the rural districts; in the first place it would interfere with the labour market, because boys who have been working in the fields all day, can hardly be expected to attend classes every evening; and, in the next place, the difficulty with regard to girls would be even greater. On this point Archdeacon Barber, for 12 years Diocesan Inspector in the Diocese of Oxford, when before the Royal Commission, was asked (Question 49,779)—

"Should you be prepared to say whether you thought it a feasible plan to require compulsory attendance in evening schools?—A. I should hardly think that it was feasible."

Question 49,780—

"That must apply specially to rural districts?—A. Yes."

Then the Rev. F. Synge, who was appointed by the Education Department to the Norwich district in 1869, and has been there ever since, and was made Chief Inspector of the Eastern Division in 1886, was asked (Question 58,330)—

"You would not think it desirable that there should not be evening schools?—A. I think that some of the most useful of the evening schools, are those which it would be impossible to inspect and assess grants for fairly, and that they do their work much better, being free from all Government restrictions."

Question 58,334—

"We have had a considerable amount of evidence before the Commission very strongly in favour of much greater encouragement being given to evening schools; and it has sometimes been suggested to the witnesses that, though they might be comparatively easy for boys, they would be very difficult to organize for girls, owing to the necessity for caution as to their being out late at night?—A. I think that it would be exceedingly difficult to organize them so that they would not be a greater evil than good."

Question 58,335—

"Would you apply that remark to country schools, as well as to town schools?—A. Yes; I think so."

Question 58,336—

"And perhaps even more to country schools, because of the long distances and the unfrequented lanes they would have to pass?—A. Yes; I think so."

Those who know anything about rural districts will admit that to compel children over the age of 13 to attend evening schools would be nothing less than insanity, and, in fact, it could not possibly be done. A system of compulsory attendance at evening schools must apply equally to both sexes, and the House, before it comes to a decision, must carefully examine the question as it affects the girls. I believe the universal feeling of the Royal Commission was that it was absolutely impossible to enforce compulsory attendance at night schools on girls. Of course, it is comparatively easy for boys in great centres of industrial occupation to be compelled to attend, but when you come to deal with rural districts the physical difficulties in the matter are exceedingly great. The districts are scattered, and it is almost impossible for boys who have been at hard work in agricultural pursuits during long hours to be compelled to attend night schools. I therefore hope that the House will not be led away by philanthropists to enforce a system of compulsion, which, if pushed too far, might have a disastrous effect in alienating public feeling in rural districts and producing a re-action which we might have to deplore. And then, too, there is the matter of expense. When the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Education Department and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer come to address themselves to this subject they will have to make up their minds to dip their hands pretty deeply into the taxpayers' pockets. In the first place, the existing staff of school teachers will not be adequate for the additional labour which will be involved. I do not say this as an argument against continuation schools, but it is a matter which the House and the country should deliberate upon before rushing too hastily into this work. I hope, if we undertake the work, it will, indeed, be organized on a liberal scale; I am not speaking from a pecuniary point of view only, but as against that system of payment by results, which is universally denounced by the best friends of education,

and which will be specially to be deplored if it is applied to evening schools. I think Her Majesty's Inspectors, instead of looking to see if the schools pass given standards, should, in the case of evening schools, see that the schools are kept in good order, that the young people are really improving themselves, that the apparatus is satisfactory, and that the schools are doing good work. Do not let us, in fact, be tied down to that miserable system of earning so much money by so many passes, which is the bane of the day schools. An hon. Member suggested that it would be economical to employ the day teachers in the evening schools. No doubt we should thereby spend less money, but we might exhaust our material; and I do not think it would be wise to trust to that means of supply alone. I congratulate the House and the Government on the tone of the discussion.

*Mr. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I can add little that is fresh or new to that which has been said, but I venture to address the House as an hon. Member fully alive to the importance of the subject. The hon. Member who introduced this matter has entitled himself to the thanks, for many years, of the people of Liverpool by his liberal hand and his liberal thoughts, and I am quite certain that I express the feeling of my constituents in extending to him, on their behalf, thanks for bringing this matter forward. Two hon. Members have referred to the squalor of the City of Liverpool, and those who do not know may think that, in some measure, its squalidity is owing to the want of action on the part of the School Board or of the Corporation. Now, I speak in the knowledge of many hon. Members when I say that the educational authorities of Liverpool are foremost in the educational battle, and also that the great Corporation of that city has been foremost in extending sanitary improvements throughout its length and breadth. The hon. Member who introduced this matter referred to the squalor to be found in the City of New York, and he attributed it, in a great degree, to the foreign element introduced from outside quarters. I think he would have been equally accurate if he had gone on to state that the squalor of the City of Liverpool was also, to a large extent, attributable to the outside element brought into its borders. In classical history we read of a certain people who were doomed to pour water into vessels without a bottom, and sometimes I think, when I look round the streets and courts of Liverpool, with which I have been intimately acquainted all my life, that the authorities of Liverpool are very much like those unhappy people, who, after all their efforts, find that a great deal still remains to be done. I cordially approve of the Motion before the House, and perhaps I do so more cordially because it keeps clear of details; but I think that, even about the details, there will be a large amount of common agreement, and when the question comes to be reduced into practice, we shall find hon. Members on both sides of the House combining to further the better instruction of our children who are growing into men. I cordially approve of the proposal to extend the school age of children, and I am quite in favour of promoting continuation schools, which, I feel convinced, will do a great deal to bridge over that time when children are turned loose from their regular schools to enter on the battle of life. It seems to me the real *crux* of the whole thing is the matter of compulsion. I myself would strongly deprecate trying to compel these children to go to the evening schools. I believe, with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Oxford University, that, whether it be in rural or in urban districts, compulsion is practically impossible. You can neither punish the child by imprisonment or fine for playing the truant from evening schools, nor can you punish the parent who, because the child does not come back after work, is unable to send him to school. I therefore think that the compulsion would break down, and that it would be a thousand pities that it should be tried. We have been told that, in the City of London, at least £20,000 or £30,000 is spent yearly on compulsion; and the hon. and gallant Baronet, who so ably represents the London School Board in this House took to his Board great credit for the way in which they swept the streets of London. But if I may make a remark, I should say that in the Bermondsey district the streets are by no means adequately swept of waifs and strays. Indeed, I think compulsion

works very indifferently in the South and South-East of London. Then, again, in connection with this matter of continuation schools, the question of expenditure must be very carefully considered. I am perfectly ready to spend a considerable sum toward the further promotion of the education of those on whom we have already spent money; but it must be remembered that in the upper classes a vast amount of private money is wasted by well-intentioned parents in sending boys to school and college who had better have gone to work, and I submit that the State is not justified in sending a large amount of money on children over the age of 14 years, unless those children show, by their zeal in coming voluntarily to school, and by making some small payment, that they are worthy of the expenditure which the State is asked to incur for them. I am quite prepared to give each child who shows a desire for increased knowledge some opportunity of improving himself. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire spoke a great deal of the squalor and misery that arise from the neglect of parents, and he attributed it to many causes; but to my mind he omitted the one underlying cause of that misery and sorrow which exists among our people, and it is the indiscriminate management of the Poor Law system, which for centuries has done so much to demoralize the character of our people. I think, by a strict administration of the Poor Law, the miseries of our people would be greatly alleviated. And now let me return for a moment to the question of the condition of Liverpool, with a view of showing that the illiteracy is due to the outside element. After the Election of 1885 some very interesting statistics were published, and from these it seems that in the Toxteth Division, which is represented by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies, there were only 12 illiterates; in the Everton, which is the largest division in the city, there were only 17; in my own division, a good representative division in the heart of the city, combining all sorts and conditions of men, there were only 89; but in the Exchange Division, where the Irish element largely predominates, there were 339 illiterates, while in the Scotland Division, represented by my brilliant colleague, with whom I too often have to differ—and this, too, is a very small division of the city—there were no less than 428 illiterates. Now, I need not point a moral from this; I think it is sufficient to show that the squalor of Liverpool is not owing to *laches* on the part of the authorities, but that it is due largely to the introduction of that outside element which it would be inhospitable for us to refuse to receive.

*Mr. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I agree that we should not approach this question from a Party standpoint, but with the sole desire to alleviate the condition of our more unfortunate countrymen. I approve, in the first place, of the proposal to raise the age for compulsory attendance at our national schools, but I should like to point out, as the representative of an agricultural district, that hon. Members who sit for urban constituencies can scarcely have any idea of how great the pressure is upon the poorer classes, when the children are taken away from their homes at a time when they might earn a large proportion of the wages earned by the family. A child of 12 or 13 can, perhaps, earn half-a-crown a week. Well that may seem a trifling amount to some people, but perhaps it is 25 per cent of what the parents earn, and see how much it represents of added comfort for the entire family. In my own constituency the common wage of the agricultural labour is 2s. a day. How in the world a man, his wife, and five children can pay rent and find food, clothes, and firing on 12s. a week, as well as pay school fees out of the miserable pittance is a problem I have unsuccessfully tried to solve. Therefore, while I am strongly in favour of increasing the school age, I am glad that the parents will be allowed an alternative, for I believe it would be infinitely more advantageous to the poor parents as well as to the scholars themselves to keep children at school between the ages of 12 and 15 years, with an attendance sufficient to keep them in touch with their educational surroundings, than to insist on a close and regular attendance for a single year. I hope that the parents will have this opportunity given them. An hon. Member opposite said it was impossible to expect children who spent their days in the field in agri-

cultural pursuits to attend evening schools under a system of compulsion. But why not introduce the system of half-timers? Why not let the boys go to work in the morning and rest during the afternoon? They would then come fresh to their educational studies, which would have a charm for them after their half-holiday. I have done a good deal of voluntary work in evening schools in London, and I know how difficult it is to overcome the natural drowsiness of boys coming into a heated atmosphere from the fresh air after a long and hard day's work. As to the expense of the compulsory system, it has been said that £20,000 is spent yearly in sweeping the streets of London of the waifs and strays. But that is a mere bagatelle, when you come to remember that there is a population of five millions to deal with. I do not wish to make this a Party question; but when hon. Members opposite hold up their hands because an increase of expenditure is proposed in connection with national education, I would point out that there is no difficulty in finding millions when we want to increase the Navy and add to the Army Estimates. We ought not to be alarmed at a little increase of expenditure on our schools. That outlay is, in the long run, absolutely productive, whereas the money spent on the Army and Navy is not; indeed, the latter only increases the class dependent on the labouring community, and abstracts wealth from the population and impoverishes the country, while the money spent upon the education of the people makes them better wage earners and wealth producers. It is a matter for congratulation that while, since 1870, the amount spent on education has increased, the expense of pauperism has decreased and the number of criminals has diminished. In other words, we have forced open the door of our elementary schools and have compelled the children to go in, but in doing so we have closed the door of the gaol and the workhouse to them; and this is a distinct economic advantage, if we look on it from no other point of view. With regard to the pauperism that now actually prevails in our midst, hon. Gentlemen opposite appear to have underestimated the amount of it. My hon. Friend who introduced the Motion stated that he believed the pauper population of this country to be something like three millions. Well, I am afraid that this pauperism is double the number at which he set it. Instead of the number being only three millions, I greatly fear it is nearer six millions. I do not regard the pauper population as only those who, at any one given moment, are in receipt of pauper relief. I maintain that if the condition of a man is such that last year he was a pauper, and that he is looking forward to being a pauper again next year, he is in that state of abject fear, misery, despondency, dread, doubt, and difficulty which necessarily classes him amongst the paupers. If you find statistics which show that when a man's life comes to an end he has no alternative but to be classed with the paupers, I maintain that that man belongs to the pauper class. I hold in my hand some statistics compiled by Mr. M'Dougall, Vice Chairman of the Manchester Board of Guardians, according to which it appears that there are in the City of Manchester, living in a state of actual pauperism, 10·88 per cent of the entire population. But that is not all. The number who actually die in the workhouse, or in receipt of parish relief, is one in every 5·84; that is, more than 17 per cent. of the population die under the shadow of the workhouse at last. It seems almost incredible to think that when you have an audience before you of 1,000 people in the City of Manchester, you can say 171 of these people will die in the workhouse, or at the time of their death will be in receipt of workhouse relief. I do not take these figures merely on the statement of Mr. M'Dougall, Vice Chairman of the Manchester Board of Guardians, but I refer to one of his authorities — namely, the Registrar General's Report for 1879, and I find there that in public institutions, including workhouses, infirmaries, and public lunatic asylums, the deaths recorded were equal to 10·1 of all the deaths in the whole of England and Wales. This does not include those who died in receipt of outdoor relief, nor the many more who die as beneficiaries at home, and in hospitals of benevolent and philanthropic institutions. Therefore, it is indisputable that beyond the 10 per cent of the population which die in the workhouse and other institutions, those who live in

poverty but escape the workhouse at the end of life are also very numerous. This reveals a most miserable state of things, and I am glad my hon. Friend has brought forward one aspect of this case of pauperism, and has made an effort in one direction of relieving it. I do not believe his plan will have the far-reaching effect and influence which he expects. There are many disintegrating causes at work. Education alone will not be enough to relieve us from the miserable position in which we are placed. I look to other social efforts. I look forward to the time when workhouses will be done away with, and we shall have work-fields and workyards where those now driven to the so-called workhouse can earn a livelihood. I look forward to the time when men and women, having a larger share of the wealth they create, will be released from the necessities and troubles which now surround them, and will gladly contribute to the education of others, as we now insist that they shall share better educational advantages from the State.

*THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir W. HART DYKE, Kent, Dartford): I will not detain the House by enlarging on, or dealing further with the sad and gloomy topics which the hon. Member who has just sat down brought under our notice. I do not admit the correctness of his figures, or the accuracy of the conclusions he has drawn, and I cannot help thinking that he seems disposed to paint the shadows rather too darkly, and to admit too little sunshine into the picture. I would rather go back to the more pleasant aspect of the case. So far as I am concerned I am sure there is no Member in the House who feels the difficulty of the position that I have the honour to hold than I do, or the inadequacy with which I fill it. If there is anything that can encourage a man in my position, it is the candid and generous treatment I have received on all sides of the House, and if I disagree from some of my friends and their conclusions it will be in no hypercritical or contentious spirit, but in an earnest desire to carry out the object of the hon. Member for Flintshire has in view in bringing forward the Motion. It is rather difficult to deal with the formal Resolution on the Paper, because it is partly shadowed or accompanied by a Bill; and between the two there is some divergence. The Resolution refers to those who leave day schools early; but the hon. Member, in his speech, contemplates schools for ex-day scholars of from 12 to 16, and for those who have passed the exemption standard. The hon. Member suggests that the last standard may be taken in the continuation school; but I am strongly of opinion that there would be something hazardous in breaking up day-school life. If you fix a standard of exemption, you ought to secure that the education is completed in the day school. If I had any doubts on the point beforehand, they have been confirmed by the debate. The State has a right to demand absolute security for the value of that for which it pays, and I think we have had ample indications in this debate to show that if the education in the last standard is confided to night schools the security as to that standard will be of an illusory character. The day-school education should be completed at the day school, from which the continuation school should be kept quite distinct. The hon. Member for Liverpool gave a gloomy picture of neglected children in large towns; but the hon. Member appeared to be carried away by his enthusiasm, for, go where you will, to town or agricultural district, there is a general concurrence in the statement that children are now better fed, clothed, cared for, and educated than they were 10 or 12 years ago. The hon. Member has quoted the City of Liverpool with which he is well acquainted, but I maintain that the condition of things there is exceptional, and that people of the knowledge and common sense of Members of this House who are constantly travelling and visiting the large centres of the country will confirm the view I have just expressed. I can speak confidently in this matter of the condition of the children of the wage earning class in the agricultural districts of Kent. And, Sir, when the hon. Member presents to the House his gloomy picture of the state of these unfortunate neglected children in our large towns I would appeal to something stronger and more material than our own observation and experience, I would appeal to the statistics of crime—for, after all, if the picture the hon. Member draws

has anything of truth in it, it means infant crime. If these vast numbers of neglected children which he pictured are constantly running about the streets by night, contaminated by everything evil, I say it can only lead to one possible result—namely, infant crime. What is the main result of the statistics? They amount to this, that since Mr. Forster's Act of 1870 was passed our population has increased by one-fourth, and in spite of that increase that our juvenile crime is to-day exactly half what it was in 1870. I think, therefore, that the hon. Gentleman opposite has painted the picture in too deep and fervid a colour. There is perfect unanimity as to the object in view. The House of Commons is unanimous on the subject, and the Royal Commission unanimously reported in favour of encouraging the system of evening and continuation schools. I shall, no doubt, be asked what is the view of Her Majesty's Government in the matter. In reply to this inquiry, I am obliged to contest much that has been said as to the actual position of our evening school system. Many gentlemen, in referring to that system, have dealt only with the bare figures as they appear in connexion with the grants paid by the Education Department; but that is an altogether fallacious view to take. It ignores the vast amount of good that has been done by voluntary effort and in other ways. The minority Report of the Commission, in dealing with this question, was strongly in favour of extending the system of continuation schools. Yet they concluded with some very remarkable observations — that while they thought the State, through the Education Department, should help these schools as much as possible, and while the local machinery of School Boards should also be directed to their improvement and extension,

"We are of opinion that this is a branch of education in which we must endeavour very largely to enlist voluntary activity and co-operation."

To my mind, taking the view I do of the existing state of things—that is a very encouraging sentence—and, in view of that, I should like to point to another sentence in the Minority Report, in which the Commissioners allude to the systematizing of science and art schools, the expansion of mechanics' institutions, and other agencies. From the first day I entered the Education Department I have given most earnest attention to this question, and the first motive which induced me to introduce a Technical Instruction Bill was that a vast number of youths and others would, under the operation of such a measure, be attracted to evening classes. In addition to the voluntary agencies to which I have alluded, the Recreative Evening Schools Association is doing a vast amount of good in our large towns, and there are also the Science and Art classes. I often think it is too much the fashion to ignore the extraordinary amount of good which these classes are doing. In making these observations I am not pleading against the Motion, nor against any assistance the Government can give to continuation schools, but simply pointing out what is being done by the Science and Art Department, and showing the extraordinary increase which is yearly going on in connection with these classes. At the April, May, and June examinations in 1888, the number of Science Schools examined was 2,035; and up to November last the number of applications sent in by schools for forms in the present year has been 2,212, showing an increase in one year of 200 schools. Take the number of students in the schools. In 1888, the number of students was 113,000; and in the Estimates for 1889-90, the Department Estimates for 125,000—an increase of 12,000 scholars —and a proportionate increase is anticipated in the Art Classes. These figures show that a vast movement is every year going on in connection with these classes at the expense of the Exchequer. As regards evening classes, there is a growth of something like 8 per cent. this year, and there is an increase in the number of students receiving instruction in additional subjects There is another very important element which, I think, we ought to consider in dealing with the question, and that is the one the hon. Gentleman opposite has referred to, technical education. I am glad my right hon. Friend has appealed to me on it, and I hope that before the end of the Session he will appeal to me in still more harsh terms if nothing is done. I am most anxious to carry the Bill dealing with that subject, and although it is not distinctly mentioned

in the Queen's Speech, my colleagues in the Government are equally anxious to see the measure passed. There are one or two difficulties in the way, but I hope we shall be able to surmount them; and, so far as I am concerned, I will leave no stone unturned to deal with the question in the present Session. Something has been done to remove the extraordinary hindrance which has hitherto been placed in the way of evening schools by the stringent requirement of the Department as to elementary subjects. It has been discovered that the sooner this restriction is removed the better will it be for the evening schools and for the cause of education. It has been stated that if this hindrance were removed, the 30,000 schools would become 60,000, and I do not regard that an exaggerated estimate. I am not divulging any Cabinet secret if I state that in the new Education Code there will be a provision whereby any scholar who can show that within six months of the time of his appearing in the school he has passed a certain standard, he will not be bothered with any of the elementary subjects, but will be free to be put in additional subjects, as the locality may deem necessary. I hold that in a question of this kind, the common-sense view is to leave the localities to deal with the curriculum as much as possible, although with State aid it is, of course, necessary to have some security that the money is not wasted. I do not say these things in antagonism to the Motion, but simply to show that as far as the Government are concerned they are not blind to the necessities of the day, and that they recognize as one of the chief and most urgent necessities of the day the advance and encouragement of evening and continuation schools in every possible way. As to the standard of exemption in Elementary Schools I am not prepared to join issue with hon. Members. It is a very large and important question affecting not only the educational future of the country, but the labour market. The one commercial centre most affected by the half-timers—Bradford—resents most strongly any interference with the present standard of exemption. I have here a memorial from the school authorities in Bradford which, referring to the hon. Gentleman's Bill of last year, said—

"As the Bill now stands it would create an impracticable condition of things in Bradford if it did not give rise to an open revolt against the Education Act as a whole."

I quote this merely to show that the Government cannot introduce legislation without a due consideration of the whole subject. Then the question of the supply of teachers—one on which both the minority and majority of the Commission insisted—has to be faced in any attempt to provide the continuation schools suggested. I do not agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Evesham (Sir R. Temple) in suggesting that the day teachers should be employed in the night schools. The teachers are an already overworked body of men having quite enough to attend to during the day. Again, the question of compulsion has to be met in any attempt to deal with the question in the terms of the Resolution before the House. The minority of the Commission were not prepared to advocate the system of compulsion. A State-aided system to be successful ought to be universal; and then there are difficulties to be met in suburbs and agricultural districts, where scholars will have to travel a great distance. Some security ought to be provided that the schools will be successful and that the children will attend. It has been urged, and I am of opinion it would be better to lessen the harshness and asperity of school life and adopt some system more likely to make the schools draw. But then the taxpayers ought to be consulted on the point before they are asked to put their hands into their pockets. They ought to have the chance of asking the question, "Where is education to end and where is amusement to begin in these continuation schools?" Then another question that will rise will be that of secondary education. I do not say whether it is right that the State should pay for it or not; but I maintain that if the taxpayers are to pay for secondary education, it is only fair that they should first be told of the new incubus to be laid upon them. I assure hon. Members on both sides of the House that any measure which may be introduced on the subject will receive the candid consideration of the Government; but as far as legislation during this Session is concerned, I must say that I do not think there will be much

chance for it if the present rate of progress is maintained. I should be glad if I could carry a measure dealing with technical education; but, so far, it seems that the Session is to be one for Supply only. Independently of that, however, I, in my responsible position, will do my utmost to promote the cause which has to-night been advocated in the House.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): I think all hon. Members will feel we are indebted to the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) not only for the admirable speech he has delivered but also for one of the most useful and interesting debates we have had for some time. I find myself in agreement with the hon. Gentleman in nearly all the statements he made. I think, however, my hon. Friend underrated the enormous work already done in education, and exaggerated, somewhat, the results which we may hope to follow upon the establishment of continuation schools. How is it that my hon. Friend is able to draw such a deplorable picture of the state of our elementary education after 18 years of work and the large expenditure of money which has taken place during that period? It is not at all difficult to explain. When Mr. Forster brought in his Education Bill there were 3,000,000 fewer children at school than there are to-day. Mr. Forster was so anxious to obtain a recognition of a standard for labour that when the local authorities came to him and fixed a Standard at which children should pass out of school and take employment, he was glad to accept almost any standard they brought, and he did in some instances accept a standard for total exemption as low as the third. But Standard IV. prevails very largely throughout the country, and especially in the rural districts. What has happened? Standard IV. is a standard which, when Mr. Forster passed the Act, was not attainable by children until they were something like 12 or 13 years of age, but now it is commonly attainable by children of 10 years of age. Better the regularity of attendance, better the quality of teaching, and the same children pass the Standards of education, until it has come to this, that clever children in large numbers pass the necessary Standard at an early age, and, especially in rural districts, pass out of school. There can be no more wasteful system than to allow children to pass out of school at 10 years of age, and forget at the time they are about 13 nearly all they have acquired at so much expense. The Vice-President of the Committee (Sir W. Hart Dyke) has expressed his approval of the object the hon. Member for Flintshire has at heart. The Vice-President is always courteous and always sympathetic, but then he has not always got the power to carry out his good wishes and intentions. When hon. Members reproach the Vice-President with the pedantry of his Department, they must recollect that it is not the pedantry of the Education Department that is to be complained of, but it is the parsimony of the Treasury. It is no use blaming the right hon. Gentleman because he does not give a larger amount of grant or a larger latitude to School Boards, but it is the Chancellor of the Exchequer who is to be complained of. I am glad to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer present, because I want to make a request, which I trust he will find it difficult to refuse. In 1887 the right hon. Gentleman, addressing a large audience in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, pointed out how important it was that the children of the country should enjoy the advantages of technical education, and hoped the people would not let Irish obstruction stand between them and the education of their children. There is no Irish obstruction now; it is Treasury obstruction. The Vice-President hopes he will be able to carry his Technical Education Bill, but he seems to fear delay in the House. There will be no delay in the House. [MR. GOSCHEN: Will you see to that?] Let the right hon. Gentleman produce his Bill. We have had it mentioned in the Queen's Speech twice, and two Bills have been laid on the Table, but both have been withdrawn. Why? Because they have been condemned by the Liberal Unionists, supporters of the Government. Let us have a good measure introduced; let us have it soon, and I think I can promise the right hon. Gentleman that it will not occupy many—I will not say days, but hours, to pass. I must say another word in defence of the good work that has been done by the Education Department. My hon. Friend (Mr. S. Smith) pointed out that

only 128,000 children have passed annually the VI and VII Standards. I agree with him that every child who passes out of school should pass the VI Standard, but what was the state of things 18 years ago? When Mr. Forster introduced his Bill, the number of children presented in the VI Standard in any one year was only 24,000. Then the VI Standard was the present V; there was no VI and VII; and what have we done? Last year 265,000 children were presented in the V Standard, (formerly the VI,) and 128,000 children were presented in the VI and VII. That is a marvellous advance, one which must be a source of rejoicing to everyone. I agree with a good deal of what was said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Evesham (Sir R. Temple). The London School Board are doing magnificent work in the Metropolis. They have done more to civilize and humanize the poor and wretched classes than any other body in the Metropolis. I hope they will continue in the good work, and not flinch because it costs another ¼d. or ½d. in the rate. We are very economical whenever education is mentioned. As a matter of fact we are wasteful, because we do not complete our work. There is no man of business would ever dream of doing his business as we do ours—leaving off in the middle and letting the part we have done perish because we will not furnish the remainder. Now, I am bound to say that while the Motion of the hon. Member for Flintshire refers only to night schools, the hon. Gentleman practicaly impeaches the whole of our educational arrangements. I think he is right, because the arrangements made by the Education Act of 1870 became obsolete by 1880. The Vice President has said that Bradford objects to any interference with the half-time Standard. It used to be Standard II, but now it is Standard III. Will he believe that in Yorkshire, in Lancashire, and in the Midlands there are factory towns in which factory labour is important and where there is Standard IV for half-timers and Standard VI for full-timers. I hope that the Report of the Royal Commission will not be left without Legislation. I trust that we shall raise the age of exemption throughout by law. With the exception of Belgium and Russia, England works its children longer hours and harder than any other country in Europe. In most countries children cannot leave school until they are 14, but in England children are allowed to begin work at 10. Now, while compulsion is necessary for day schools, I think it very doubtful whether it should be applied to the night schools, which should be made attractive. With the widest range of colonies in the world, we want to see our people enterprizing and ready to go out into the world rather than sit at home and starve. Therefore we should teach them the geography and resources of our colonies. Those also who are intended to engage in commerce should have the advantage of being able to learn a foreign language. But, more than all, what is wanted from one end of England to the other is technical education. We are told by everybody—by Professor Huxley, by Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by others—how important technical education is for the people, and yet we cannot get a fair Bill laid on the Table. A Bill on that subject might be passed in less time than this debate has taken. Why not refer it to a Grand Committee, as was done in the case of the Railway Bill last year? Again, I entirely agree that it is of the utmost importance to maintain our infant schools. That is a part of our system of which we have reason to be proud. I do not believe any system in Europe can compare favourably with it. My hon. Friend made reference to Berlin, and spoke of the kind of education given there. When I was there some three years ago, and investigated this matter for myself, I was astounded to find the numbers of children who attended the principal schools in Berlin. There is a school within a few yards of the British Embassy, through which I was told in three years 2,000 scholars under 17 had passed in the higher curriculum adopted, and in the various industries of Berlin they desired to follow. In all the 19 arrondissements of Paris, languages, technical education, art and science teaching, as applied to industry, can be obtained free of cost by any man coming out of the street in any of the schools of the arrondissements. Nothing is more astonishing to an Englishman than to see the sacrifices foreign nations are making to enable their workmen to compete in the production and beauti-

fying of manufactures. The Vice-President has assured us that when he lays the New Code upon the Table we shall find in it some of the provisions we are so anxiously looking for, and I can promise him in this matter of the Code that anything that appears there shall have not only our most careful but our most favourable consideration. I know the difficulties of his position in regard to payments by results. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. G. Talbot) spoke in a tone of strong condemnation of the system, and is anxious that we should abandon it, but I am surprised to hear from him, an advocate of the voluntary system, a condemnation of payments by results. I want to know how you are going to pay away millions from the Exchequer without having some test of the application of the money. The whole difficulty is a consequence of the voluntary system, whether we like it or not. You cannot pay into the hands of voluntary managers money without exacting some proof that the money is well expended. You may pay it to local authorities, to elected bodies over whom yon exercise supervision, but it is not possible to pay to private persons, however good may be their intentions and however good their management, without some test as to how the money is expended. I only hope the Vice-President will lay, not only the Code, but his Technical Instruction Bill, upon the Table, and I hope it will be advanced with the least possible delay. He may be assured it will be received with the most sympathetic consideration by the House.

Major RASCH (Essex S.E.): As a Member for an agricultural constituency I cannot help offering a most emphatic protest against the bare idea of continuing compulsory educasion after the age of 13. In towns it may be well and good, but in agricultural and rural districts it would be an absolute and complete fiasco. What the agricultural labourer wants, and what he has some expectation of having, is that his children shall not be kept entirely at school after the age of 12, when they are able to work. Where the agricultural shoe pinches, is not in the fact of having to pay school pence—I believe the hon. Member for Spalding (Mr. H. Stewart) will agree with me—but the fact that the labourers' children are taken away precisely at the time when they are wanted—to use a colloquial expression—"to keep the pot boiling." To tell him that his children are to be kept at school till the age of 23 is to pile up the agony, to put the last straw upon an agricultural labourer's back, when he is extremely ill able to bear it.

*Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I join in the meads of praise which have been so repeatedly uttered concerning the service done to the cause of Education by the hon. Member for Flintshire in introducing this discussion, but I cannot help thinking the discussion has often strayed from the immediate purpose of the Motion the hon. Member has given notice of, and would have moved had the forms of the House permitted. The subject of this Motion is the desirability of establishing a system of Evening Continuation Schools. Now we have heard a great deal about the whole system of Elementary Schools in the country, but we have not heard so much as I would have desired to have heard concerning the especial subject of the hon. Member's Motion. In order to explain the point of view I desire to lay before the House, I will call attention to a phrase used in the Resolution that gives some reason for possible differences between Members who are heartily in sympathy with the hon. Member and the object he has in view. The Motion speaks of Evening Continuation Schools "where children who leave Elementary Day Schools at a very early age may continue their education." Now we ought to distinguish two entirely different things; on the one hand real continuation schools adapted to prolong the normal culture of children, to give them a further amount of knowledge and develop the instruction they have received at day schools up to the age of 13 or 14; and, on the other hand, evening schools to do the work left undone by day schools in the case of very young children. These are two entirely different things. The hon. Member and others have referred to evening schools carried on in considerable numbers by Continental nations, but these are schools to continue the education and culture children have previously received, and in a measure perfectly received up to the age of 13 or 14. But the very notion of schools held in the evening in which hard-worked

young children of 10 or 11 years of age are to attend after some four or five hours' manual labour during the day, and weary their brains with endeavours to master reading, writing, and arithmetic, is wholly foreign to any idea of education in any country on the Continent, and I wish it were foreign to every civilized nation. Hon. Gentlemen have spoken as if it were quite within the limit of human nature for boys and girls of 11 and 12 years of age to go to the evening school, and there weary their young, immature minds after engaging in manual labour during the day. The very idea of the thing is, to my mind, most cruel and inhuman. I would ask fathers of families who know what the burden imposed upon boys and girls by evening after-school lessons is, what they think of such a proposition? Over and over again we have had complaints of the evening study required from boys and girls at high schools. It has been asked is it wise, is it healthy for young children to spend as much as two hours' mental labour in the evening? I know that head-masters and principals of girls' schools have issued instructions to parents that for children of 10 or 12 not more than an hour's evening study is desirable, and for older children not more than two. With what decency, with what pretence to human sympathy, can we propose that young and tender children should occupy four or five hours in manual labour during the day and then attend school in the evening? It is impossible that they can derive any benefit from it. Therefore I cannot sympathize or agree with any portion of the speech of my hon. Friend in which, if I rightly interpreted him, he seemed to favour the idea that we could supply the defects of our system of elementary education in allowing a short time at day schools by sending children to school in the evening. [Mr. SAMUEL SMITH: I did not advocate that.] I am sorry if I misunderstood him, but I can claim some justification from the terms of the Resolution itself—"children who leave day schools at a very early age." That must surely mean children under 12 years, and, if so, I say such children ought not to be allowed to attend schools in the evenings. I deprecate that most earnestly, most emphatically. I am of opinion that proper continuation schools are in the highest degree desirable for boys and girls who leave ordinary schools at the age of 13 or 14. I am very sorry that the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Major Rasch) should consider it necessary to protest against children continuing at school until they are 14. Why, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) says, in no European nation that boasts any high rank in education is such a thing tolerated as that a child should leave school before the age of 14 unless under very peculiar circumstances, and I trust to see the time come when no child shall be allowed to go to work before the age of 14. I know it is often said that it is very necessary to poor parents that their children should go to work at an early age, but I deny it altogether. I say it is wholly against the interest of the labouring classes that child-labour should be introduced so profusely as it is. It lowers the standard of life; it lowers the standard of expenses a parent is expected to meet, and, therefore, it lowers the standard of wages. If no parent had a prospect of sending his child to work until the age of 14, the standard of wages would rise, for parents would always have to consider and have to regard the necessity of providing for their children up to that age. It is a most short-sighted, unsound view to take of the interests of the working classes, that they should be allowed to send the labour of young, immature children to compete with adult labour—for that is really the meaning of it. Therefore, so far as my remarks are concerned, I wish to deal only with proper continuation schools—schools for young people between the ages of 14 and 17, at which the culture they have received at the day schools may be continued and developed. So far as the Vice President has replied on the subject, I think we may congratulate ourselves very highly on the tone of his observations, and I, as having had some experience in the matter—I as member of the earliest School Board of London for nine years, and for country School Boards after that, besides being concerned in various enterprizes for promoting culture—I say I heard the remarks the right hon. Gentleman made with the greatest pleasure. I

congratulate him upon recognizing, as he did, the necessity for considerably more elasticity in the relations between the Education Department and the local managers of evening schools, continuation schools, or others. I recognize also with pleasure the extent to which he approved of making evening schools attractive as a substitution for compulsion. I do not think it possible in this country to apply the principle of compulsion to evening schools. I know it is done to some extent in Germany, but we have other ideas of freedom here than those which obtain in Germany. I do not think the thing is possible. We must make these schools attractive if we would bring young people into them. On one point I cannot help disagreeing with the Vice President; he seemed to desire rather more supervision on the part of the Education Department than is absolutely necessary. He said—"Of course to the Education Department must be reserved the ultimate decision whether the course of education devised for an evening school is wise or not." Well, I know, if the Government are to grant money, they must be consulted, and that their authority must have weight in regard to the curriculum we adopt; but I beseech the right hon. Gentleman to get rid of the superstition that while obscurity reigns outside the Department, but that Whitehall has a peculiarly luminous atmosphere.

*SIR W. HART DYKE: May I explain? What I referred to was supervision to see no subject was taught that was practically absurd. I always supposed there would be a liberal curriculum.

*MR. PICTON: Of course, I am unable to contravene the view urged that no subject which is absurd should be taught; but I think it is highly improbable that any local authorities would desire to have such a subject taught. All I want to say is this—that human nature is the same in Whitchall or Little Pedlington, but Little Pedlington understands its own requirements better than Whitehall; and there should be considerable room for experience—greater elasticity or freedom—allowed to local authorities in this matter. Another subject referred to is the creation of the evening school staff to be employed; and, as to the cost, various hon. Gentlemen have spoken with some fear, if all the young people are gathered into these schools as we should like to see them. When I heard these remarks, I could not but call to mind those discussions upon which we have recently been occupied. Of course I should not be in order to go into them, but I may refer for a moment to the proposal for granting extraordinary sums for naval and military expenditure. It seems there is no limit to extravagance when these destructive services are concerned; but when the building up of our civilization, the culture of our race, is concerned, parsimony and timidity reign supreme! I suppose I may not hope to live to see the day, but I hope it may be in the time of my great grandchildren, or within a few generations, when more money will be spent on schools than on the Army and Navy. For that end I think we ought to work. If money is wanted for our schools, and we cannot—and we ought not to—raise it by fresh taxation, then it should be economized from money saved out of warlike and destructive expenditure. But I pass from that. There was considerable reason in the discursive allusions that have been made repeatedly during the evening to the system pursued in our ordinary day schools, and many reasons have been given for the difficulties that have been found in working our evening schools as we should desire. It seems to me the chief difficulty lies in the inefficiency of our day school system. It is well known that children do not for the most part—I know there are exceptions—do not leave the day school having passed the Fifth or Sixth Standard, with any enthusiastic desire to learn more. The whole system has been so mechanical, so painful and tiresome, that all but exceptional children are glad to get rid of school, and dread the idea of entering a continuation school. I may be permitted to refer to a principle I have at times enunciated when the subject of education has been before us, the need of moulding, of co-ordinating our whole educational system into a unity—a unity of organic development. In this point of view, infant schools have been rightly referred to. I am sorry my hon. Friend (Mr. S. Smith) does not seem sufficiently to appreciate the work of infant schools; but I am convinced that

in the most improved methods of infant school training, such as Froehel's, we have the proper system which by natural development could be pursued throughout ordinary day schools, and without any detriment to learning in the evening schools, and it would be so attractive to the scholars that there would be no temptation to stay away. We cannot treat one part of our educational system without regarding the whole, and if this leads us to appreciate the necessity for one principle running through our whole system, this discussion will not have been in vain. Though I differ from my hon. Friend on some points, I cannot help congratulating him on what, I hope, will be the fruitfulness of the discussiou he has raised.

*Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): I have been very much interested in the debate, but I have heard very little in favour of the Motion, and if it had been possible to call a Division I should have voted against the Motion. Had it been possible to move an Amendment to the Resolution, I should have proposed it in this form—

"That it is desirable to develop the existing system of education by evening schools, where children who have left elementary day schools, not before they have attained the age of 13 and have passed the sixth standard, may continue their education."

That I think would express the opinion of the generality of speakers this evening. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield made an eloquent speech in favour of technical education, but I do not think he said anything in favour of the Resolution. In the remarks that fell from the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) there is much with which I agree. We must all see the gravity of the problem presented. We see the expense of our system growing at a fearful ratio, while we see in our great cities a great amount of human misery. In the development of education lies the best influence on the future of the working classes. Certainly, I should like to see the age of compulsory attendance raised to 13, and no child allowed to leave school until he passes the Sixth Standard. I know the difficulties; I view the future with anxiety, and I feel how sad is the picture the hon. Member (Mr. S. Smith) has put before the House. But in the extension of a true, sound, rational, and Christian system of education, I see the best hope for the future. Education leads to emigration, and in emigration there are the means of escape for hundreds of thousands from lives of misery. I do not, however, think a proposal such as this will assist us. If the Government can see their way to raising the age of exemption from attendance at school and raise the standard of education they will do a wise and just thing; but, on other hand, I do not minimize the difficulties involved in such a policy —*Primum est vivere, dein philosophare*— and our agricultural classes can scarcely keep their children from starvation in many cases, so that the benefits of education often seem to them to be a cruel mockery. However, I congratulate the hon. Member for Flintshire on having brought this matter before the House, as I think it has resulted in a very useful debate. But, so far as the Motion is concerned, it is certainly one I should have voted against, if it had been in my power to do so.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford): I wish to make an explanation as to the position taken by the borough I have the honour to represent in regard to the representation made to the Education Department—referred to by the right hon. Gentleman—in the Memorial that was sent in in regard to the half-time system. I should be sorry if the impression were to get abroad that Bradford is indifferent to education. The House will know that no town in the country interested itself in education with more zeal, and vigour, and liberality at the time of the passing of the Education Act of the late Mr. Forster; but it should be known that nearly half the whole number of half-timers engaged in the textile industry of England are engaged in the district of Bradford. Bradford, therefore, is singled out in reference to this question affecting the great industrial community. I wish the House to understand that if any arbitrary or severe step is taken in raising the standard suddenly and inconsiderately, it will be the death-blow for years to the industry of the town I represent. Our machinery and the character of the industry carried on make it absolutely necessary that young people should be engaged in certain branches of that industry. We have already had a raising

of the standard, and I have no doubt that in a moderate time it will be possible to go a step further. An hon. Member opposite aptly quoted the old proverb, "It is necessary to live before you begin to philosophize." Many people come to these towns because they have children. Widows come in large numbers because their children there can find employment. I do not wish to dwell upon this subject, the difficulty of which will be understood by the Education Department, but I wish to remove any misapprehension there may be as to the desire of Bradford, or the Bradford School Board, to do anything to hamper the cause of education. I congratulate the hon. Gentleman the Member for Flintshire on the discussion he has raised to-night. He has stimulated our desire to see something done on this question—he has done more than that, for he has been instrumental in eliciting from the representative of the Education Department an utterance pointing more to an advancement in education than anything we have hitherto had. I can only say that I think the House and the country are to be congratulated upon there having been an interlude of this kind. I can only hope that the Government, having listened to this debate, will take a somewhat different view from that which seems to prevail at this moment, which is, that the taxpayers are prepared for any extravagant expenditure in ships of war which may go to the bottom of the sea, and only become parsimonious when this question of education is mentioned. For a very small expenditure—only some £150,000—we should be able to offer to children of superior capacity in all parts of the country an opportunity of carrying their education further and of developing gifts which now lie waste, and I am sure the country would never object to the necessary expenditure. I trust the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) will re-echo the sentiments he has expressed, not only to the House, but throughout the country, and that the country will force on this and other Governments the conviction that when they are asked for something like liberality and breadth in the consideration of this educational problem it will not do to be at all parsimonious. If the Government bring forward the Measure foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, for which the country is panting, I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella) that it will be received on all sides with real unanimity.

*MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I desire to congratulate hon. Members generally, on the tone of this debate and on the fact that the discussion has not been altogether left to this side of the House. But, whilst I am content to join in the general chorus of self-congratulation, I am bound to say I have been asking myself while I have been listening to the latter part of this debate, how far there is any prospect of solid results arising out of it. I am not sure that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford has not gone a little too far in eulogizing the right hon. Gentleman the Vice-President of the Council for the speech he has made, not that I have anything to find fault with in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, but I am bound to say that I do not see that what he said advances much the cause of those evening continuation schools, whose establishment we are advocating this evening. It seems to me that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the Vice-President of the Council, really amounts to no more than this, that he will introduce certain alterations in the code which will tend to facilitate the working of the existing evening classes, and that, if allowed to do so by his colleagues, and if time permits, he will introduce and carry a Technical Education Bill. I should have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman could have seen his way to have suggested other alterations in the law, which would not have tended to raise our evening classes to a higher level of usefulness and of perfection. I should like to point out one or two directions in which I think that might be done. With regard to expense, I heartily concur with the observations which have fallen from my hon. Friends the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) and Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), as to the folly of our continually squandering large sums of money upon hostile destructive purposes, and refusing in a niggardly spirit to spend a few thousands on the immensely important business of the education of our artizans. When I

point out that in this country we are spending only a miserable sum of £6,000,000 on education against £30,000,000 on the Army and Navy, whilst in the United States the sum spent on education is at least double that spent on armaments, the House will see at once one great reason why we have to fear the competition of our cousins across the Atlantic, and one great cause why they are so far ahead of us in everything connected with commerce and industry. The more you spend on this remunerative business of education the more you get back. It is absurd to be pottering over a few hundreds of thousands of pounds on this subject of education when we ought to be glad to invest our millions on it. I am certain that if the people of the country, burdened as they are now with rates and taxes, could see that they are now being robbed of millions for worse than useless purposes and that the same millions could be employed on the advancement and developement of their own children, they would not in the least make an outcry when it was proposed so to spend their money; but would be only too pleased to pay whatever amount might be considered necessary. Another matter I desire to refer to is, the question of compulsion. Something has been said as to the impossibility of compelling children to attend night schools. I can only say it has not been found impossible to secure the attendance of children at such schools which already exist particularly in Switzerland. I am not anxious to increase the terrors of compulsion to the parents of children, because I believe that it is not by forcible means, such as prosecutions and so forth, that you can inculcate a true respect and love for your education in parents any more than you are likely to instil into the children a love for learning by frequent applications of the cane. This I believe, that if you adopt that sensible course of instruction which is advocated by the Recreative Evening Classes Association, even though it may be difficult, sometimes, to distinguish between amusement and real education —if you adopt a system thoroughly in harmony with the instincts and feelings of the children—you will have an end to the necessity for compulsion. If you make your teaching sufficiently attractive, you will find your children glad to come to the schools, and their parents delighted to send them. That, I believe, is the true antidote for compulsion. I would illustrate this by pointing to what I myself had experience of before I came to the House to-day. I was visiting one of the schools in the district which I happen to represent on the London School Board, and I found in one of the boys' department, that it was the afternoon for object lessons, and the master was teaching his pupils physical science. The master pointed with pleasure to the fact that on these afternoons when object lessons take place, he has a far higher attendance of children than on any other day in the week. Well, what happened in this school, will happen at evening classes in higher schools. If you teach the children something besides the rules of grammar—which are in the highest degree distasteful and painful to those who have them thrust down their throats day after day—if you infuse into the minds of the children something of a more practical kind, which is just as wholesome, and as calculated to benefit them in future years, you will get rid af the necessity for compulsion. In some of the reports of the best of Her Majesty's Inspectors, you will find statements to the effect that the children who have been the brightest and the most advanced in the infant classes under the Kindergarten system when sent up to the boys' and girls' branches go back in their work owing to the lack of interest attaching to the subjects taught, and owing to the methods of teaching, This shows the importance of having your curriculum adapted to the age of the child—and I hope that this is a point which the right hon. Gentleman, the Vice-President of the Council will devote careful consideration to. As to the teachers, I have been looking over a report touching the educational system of the City of Boston in the United States which has, perhaps, the highest development of the highest system of education which this world can produce. We find in this Report that the authorities declare in favour of having the best teachers at the night schools. It has been said by the hon. Member for Worcestershire (Sir R. Temple) that we are spending too much on the teaching staff, and that, if we are going to give more teaching iu even-

ing classes, it will be necessary to require the teachers in the day schools to work a sort of double shift.

*SIR R. TEMPLE: I said that some day-school teachers work at night voluntarily for extra remuneration. I did not say I would put additional work on them compulsorily, without remuneration.

*MR. CONYBEARE: I know that some of them do voluntarily undertake additional work, and where they do that there is no cause to complain; but I want to point out that there are a great number of young teachers who have been trained at great public cost in our training colleges who never find employment at all. Why should we not avail ourselves of the services of these teachers, who are amply qualified to teach, and who, I am sure, will be only too ready to undertake such employment. I do not desire to go into subjects upon which we are all more or less in harmony; but I should like to recall the attention of the House to the statemade by Sir Charles Warren, when Chief Commissioner of Police—and which may be verified by every hon. Member whe will take the trouble to look for himself at the crowds which are very often called, rightly or wrongly "the unemployed"—that numbers of those who meet in the open spaces of London, and who are arrested (and otherwise ill-treated) by the police, are young boys. Is it not of importance to consider that whenever there is a little excitement, political or otherwise, or an opportunity for people to come together, you find the greater number of them consisting of lads who are apparently out of work. It seems to me that this is a consideration bearing on the question, and that we should see if these lads could not be beneficially influenced by making the schools more attractive. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of the moral results of evening classes, and thinks that you ought not on that ground to compel attendance at night schools. For my part, I do not agree with the right hon. Gentleman. I think the moral results of night schools are, and will continue to be, in every respect admirable, and there need be no fear that girls' evening schools would prove a failure on this score. It is stated that not only is no complaint made on this ground; but, on the contrary, those who are familiar with the working of these evening classes say they are conducive to moral results, because, by providing a pleasant and attractive means of recreative instruction in well-conducted and well-lighted schoolrooms, you bring under better influences those who would otherwise be going about the streets. Therefore, I think that the alarm which has been expressed by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen is unreal, and that we may go forward with this work of educating our youth without fear, let, or hindrance, only hoping that Her Majesty's Government will do whatever they can with a view of meeting the general demand for this sort of instruction.

CROWN RIGHTS IN SCOTLAND.

*MR. BUCHANAN (calling attention to the Question of the rights of fishing in Scotland, and suggesting that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into the disposal by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests of rights of fishing and other Crown rights in Scotland), said: On the discussion on the Woods and Forests Vote last November, the Government, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, agreed that the alienation of Crown rights of Fishing in Scotland should be inquired into, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave it as his impression that the General Committee of Inquiry into the Administration of the Department, already promised, would not be a good instrument for this inquiry. A more special Committee, mainly consisting of Scotch Members, would be preferable. Accordingly, last week, I put a Question to the First Lord of the Treasury as to whether he intended to appoint such a Committee, and the right hen. Gentleman stated in reply that—

> "The reference to the proposed Committee would not exclude the disposal of Crown rights in Scotland from being investigated;"

and he further stated that—

> "If it should appear that a Special Committee was necessary the Government would not refuse it."

If the case for the appointment of such a Special Committee was strong in November, it is much stronger now; and this on Parliamentary grounds as well as on general grounds. Since 1832 two Committees have been appointed to

inquire into the administration of the Woods and Forests Department—one in 1833, and another in 1849. I have examined the Reports of those Committees, and I find that the case of Scotland was entirely overlooked, the evidence having dealt almost exclusively with larger and wider questions relating to England; and if the Question is to be referred to a General and not to Special Committee of Inquiry, the Scotch Members can only anticipate a similar result. It is only in recent years that the Woods and Forest Department has proceeded to make sales of fishing rights in Scotland. These sales began about the year 1872. In the year 1883-84 there were seven sales of sea salmon fishing rights in Scotland and the price realized was £15,800; in the next year, 1884-85 there were ten sales of sea salmon fishing rights in Scotland, one sale of foreshore to the bugh of Dumbarton, and one of river salmon fishing, the total price being £4,600; in 1885-86 there was one sale of sea salmon fishings, four sales of river fishings and one of foreshore for Tynabruaich pier, the price being £375; in 1886-87 there were two sales of river salmon fishings, of which the price was £45, and three of Loch Morar salmon fishing, the price being £270, namely, one to Mrs. Nicholson, for £60, one to Lord Lovat for £150, and one to Colonel Macdonald for £60; while in 1887-88 there was one sale of Loch Morar fishings to Mrs. Cambell for £150, three sales of sea salmon fishings for a total of £4,175 and one sale of land at Stirling for £310. I and my hon. Friends who took part in the discussion of this question in November last contended that it was not merely one of the sale of the rights of salmon fishing in a particular loch in Scotland, but that it was also a great public question—that it was not the actual value of the rights of fishing in Loch Morar that would ensue from the concession of these salmon fishing rights to the riparian proprietors; and what we contended for has been amply justified by what has since taken place. It has transpired that although there was trout fishing, there was no salmon fishing in Loch Morar and what has resulted from the proceedings in the Court of Session is that by the concession of the rights of fishing in Loch Morar, the riparian proprietors have been able to shut out the public from going in boats upon the loch and from navigating freely on that water as they have been accustomed to do from time immemorial. Even before the case was brought before the Court of Quarter Sessions, the very first action the riparian proprietors took was to give notice to the inhabitants on the shores of the loch, that they must part with their boats, and that they could not be any longer allowed to use their boats in the loch. The net result of it was this—the application was made and stated by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, as a cession of the right of fishing. It has been found to be a right which can be construed, and which has been construed into a deprivation of the general rights of the people in the enjoyment of moving freely to and fro upon this vast sheet of water. No doubt Loch Morar is a very long way off, and situated in a very sparsely populated part of the country. What has been done in the east of Loch Morar may be done in the case of many others of the waters of Scotland. As my hon. Friend behind me also says, there are other fishing rights on the seashore with which the Woods and Forests have to do, and there is the question of foreshores, fishing of salmon, and the fishing rights of the foreshores. These are questions which I wished to deal with had there been more time at my disposal. What I wish to urge upon the Government is this, that if our case was strong, as it was acknowledged to be strong by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Treasury in November last, it is very much stronger now. We contended then that it was not a mere formal question of fishing, but a matter in which important public rights were involved. And that has been clearly demonstrated in the Court of Session. The question is very wide, far reaching, and important to the public, and is one which commands very great attention in Scotland; and the decision of the Government upon it is looked forward to with considerable eagerness and attention in Scotland. It is an especially Scotch question, which I think ought to be investigated by an especially Scotch Committee. It is a question, the settlement of which, the

longer delayed, will, I feel perfectly convinced in my own mind, be productive of still more wide and far reaching issues, by leading to further agitation in the country, and to a stronger case being brought before this House. I do most earnestly urge upon the Government to carry out what I certainly thought was the understanding in November last, that we should have a special inquiry into this subject; and that this special inquiry will be conducted in the manner we should have expected—namely, by a Select Committee of this House, consisting mainly of Scotch Members.

MR. HALDANE (Haddington): There is one point on which I should like an answer from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think upon the last occasion when this subject was discussed, the Chancellor of the Exchequer very reasonably recognised the necessity of some inquiry into this matter. He suggested that the inquiry could be very satisfactorily conducted by a Committee representative generally of the administration of Crown rights. The situation seems to me to be one which commands some consideration. As I understand, the position is this—the Crown is trustee of certain rights for the public, that is to say, the local public, because it is nonsense to talk of the Crown being trustee of, say, the rights of foreshore up in the Northern islands, or the rights of salmon-fishing in those regions. The public generally, if they choose to go there, can go; but it seems to me that the sense in which you are trustees for the public does not for a moment bear out the suggestion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that there was a difficult and delicate question as to whether it might not be the duty of the Crown to dispose of those rights, and to turn them into money, and put the money into Consolidated Fund. It seemes to me that the trusteeship of the Crown is an open trusteeship. In that sense it cannot be a question or matter for the Committee at all to decide whether the Crown is to sell those rights and turn them into money, and apply them to the benefit of the Consolidated Fund. You might just as well say that, because people who live in the Northern Hebrides do not come often to St. Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey therefore, you might sell those edifices and apply the money to the Consolidated Fund. These rights are of a local nature. As I understand the law it is this. Some of these rights the Crown cannot alienate at all. Others they can alienate under their direct trusteeship for local interests, but only on certain statutory conditions which are imposed upon the localities. I think in the 2nd William IV. there was an Act passed which placed all those Crown rights under the provisions of an earlier Act, 10th George IV., which was passed for their regulation in England. In that earlier Act you can only dispose of those Crown rights under certain restrictions. There must be a broader application, and, unless the purchase money is less than 100 years, there are certain other conditions which have to be observed. What we want is a Select Committee of some kind, which should not merely inquire into general matters. It should not even discuss such questions as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has suggested, and which seem to me to be questions for this House, and not for any Committee. It should inquire not merely into the restriction which is to be imposed upon the action of the Commissioners, acting under the direction of the Treasury, for the future, but also into the validity of some transactions which have taken place within the last ten years, and which seems to me to be very doubtful. It is perfectly true there is a provision in the Statute protecting *bonâ fide* purchasers against irregularities; but if, as occurred in two or three transactions, the Solicitor to the Woods and Forests Commissioners was at once acting for the Crown and a private purchaser, it does seem to me that is a matter which ought to be the subject of some investigation by a special Committee. In that view, it is impossible for me to accept the suggestion that a general Committee, extending the scope of the inquiry to England, could look satisfactorily into that matter. There must be a special Committee for this purpose. I trust that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who seemed to take a most reasonable view of this matter on the last occasion, will give an expression of assent to an opinion which I am confident is the opinion of the whole of the Scotch Members.

*Mr. C. FRASER MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire): After what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said last year, I am rather disappointed with the course of the debate this year. If a Scottish Committee is not granted, a great deal more will be heard about this subject. One word in illustration of these Crown rights. Many years ago, the foreshore of the island of Lewis, extending to several hundred miles, was sold for £400, but when the Harbour Commissioners of Stornoway wanted a small piece of ground to extend their harbour, they were asked to pay no less than £100 a-year. These are matters worthy of consideration, and I must say that a special Committee of Inquiry will be the most advantageous.

Mr. JACKSON: The Government cannot consent to the granting of the special Committee the hon. Member is asking for. It will be in the recollection of the House that my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, in the autumn of last year, agreed to the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry into the administration of Woods and Forests and Crown Revenues. That Committee of Inquiry will shortly be appointed—as soon as I can get the names. The question which the hon. Member has brought forward is one of which I quite admit the importance to the localities interested; nevertheless it is a question which may be inquired into by such a Committee as we propose, while at the same time other questions affecting other localities could be investigated. Now the administration of Woods and Forests affects not only Scotland, but Ireland, England, and Wales, and I have no doubt that the whole subject would be thoroughly considered. I may point out that there have been very few transactions of the kind which the hon. Member complains of. Of course the pledge will be kept that no more transactions of that kind should take place until the Committee had made its inquiries, and thoroughly investigated the subject. And I should expect that the hon. Member will admit that the Government have shown their desire to meet him as far as they possibly can. My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House, I think, in an answer to a question, expressly stated that this subject could not be excluded from the inquiry; and I hope that on the Committee we shall have Scotch Members thoroughly conversant with the details, and who will take very good care that the question is thoroughly investigated. I do not think, Sir, I can say more than that. It is not advisable to have a separate Committee to deal with this question; and if the Government do what they propose, I believe it will prove satisfactory to all parties.

Mr. HALDANE: Are we to understand that the Committee to be appointed will have within its scope inquiry into the validity of past transactions?

*Mr. JACKSON: I should not like to answer that question offhand. The Committee would, of course, have power to deal with all questions of administration, and would have the power to observe not only action in the past, but what action should be taken in future.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I cannot help saying that the promise of the hon. Gentleman is eminently unsatisfactory. The law respecting these public rights in Scotland is perfectly different to what the law is in England, and no general Committee can give any attention to the matter, or arrive at any decision on the subject which will commend itself to the confidence of the people of Scotland.

It being midnight, Mr. Speaker interrupted the business.

House resumed.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [14th March] reported.

(1.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £45,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of various Miscellaneous Effective Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1889."

(2.) "That 65,400 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890, including 14,000 Royal Marines."

(3.) "That a sum, not exceeding £3,201,700 be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Wages, &c., to Officers, Seamen, and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890."

(4.) "That a sum, not exceeding £1,061,100, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Victualling and Clothing for the Navy, including the cost of Victualling Establishments

at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890."

Resolutions agreed to.

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 14th instant, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and which was then agreed to by the House, be now read;

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 152,282, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1890."

Ordered, That, leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during Twelve Months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton, the Judge Advocate General, and Mr. Brodrick, do prepare and bring it in.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 161.]

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SMALL HOLDINGS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee be re-appointed to inquire into the facilities which exists for the creation of Small Holdings in Land in Great Britain; whether either in connection with an improved system of Local Government or otherwise, those facilities may be extended; whether, in recent years there, there has been any diminution in the number of Small Owners and Cultivators of Land; and whether there is any evidence to show that such diminution is due to legislation.

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Seventeen Members.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of,—Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir George Campbell, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Jesse Collings, Viscount Curzon, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. Thomas Ellis, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Compton Lawrence, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. James William Lowther, Mr. Halley Stewart, and Mr. Angus Sutherland, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

DR. TANNER (Cork, Mid): Seeing the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place, I should like to ask him whether the Government have received any intelligence respecting the election at Kennington?

No answer being returned,

DR. TANNER said: Really I must press for an answer, Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

The following is the corrected version of the Speech delivered by the UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) in the course of the Debate upon the Address, and is to be taken in place of the Report commencing at page 97 of this volume :—

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 21*st February*, 1889.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir J. FERGUSSON, Manchester, N.E.): This debate has been somewhat desultory, because by common consent the discussion of the most important questions mentioned in the Queen's Speech has been postponed until the measures are before the House. Hon. Members have complained of omissions from the Speech, but that is a little at variance with the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who hinted in his remarks that perhaps Her Majesty's Government had fallen into the error of proposing too many measures. There are, I think, plenty of topics for the consideration of Parliament which in due time will engage its attention. I have risen principally to notice remarks made by some hon. Members with reference to Foreign Affairs which deserve reply, and particularly those made by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), who has in a very temperate speech referred to subjects which have in former Sessions been discussed by him. The hon. Member takes a warm and very natural interest in the safety of trading and mission stations in Central Africa. Well, I cannot on this occasion say anything of a different nature to what I have said before, which is that, while those stations, whether commercial or missionary, are entitled to all the respect that belongs to enterprizes most honourable in themselves and involving great personal sacrifices on the part of their promoters, it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to undertake the responsibility, or to impose on this country any burdens in connection with them. These enterprizes are undertaken by the free act of their promoters, and are in a region with which the Government of this country are not in immediate contact, and in which no assistance the Government can render them could proceed from any base. It is therefore impossible that Her Majesty's Government could give any indication that those persons could depend upon any material assistance from them. I have stated that there are certain things that Her Majesty's Government will require on behalf of those persons. When the Portuguese endeavoured to close the Zambesi, except to vessels carrying the Portuguese flag, their right to do so was disputed, and it was stipulated that our countrymen should not be interrupted in obtaining those warlike stores which might be necessary to maintain their positions. I cannot recognize the justice of the complaint that the Portuguese had established a Custom-house on a tributary of the Zambesi, because it was an admission that the Portuguese territory ended there, and Her Majesty's Government have rather reason to complain that that Custom-house has been removed. The hon. Member suggested that the Government should interfere with the progress of the Portuguese force, which

[*To follow Text.*]

has gone into the interior of the country, lest it should disturb our Settlements in a region in which Portugal has hitherto exercised no functions of government. If such were likely to be the result of the expedition, it would undoubtedly be a matter of complaint on the part of Her Majesty's Government; but I hope no such occasion will arise. Her Majesty's Government do not know what is the precise object or the point at which that expedition aims; but they cannot, of course, take exception to the passage of an exploring force into the interior of the Portuguese territory. The hon. Member has referred to the events which have taken place on the Zanzibar coast, and he expressed suspicion and apprehension at the identification of German and British interests on that coast. It ought to be remembered that Her Majesty's Government were not the originators of the joint action which has been taken in this quarter. It was in 1884 that the Germans formed the project of establishing a base of influence on the East Coast of Africa, and sought from the Sultan of Zanzibar a concession of the same character as we ourselves had acquired, and in the following year Her Majesty's Government were directly approached by the Government of Germany with the view of obtaining their consent to such an arrangement, and it was certainly the act of a friendly Power to carry us with them in their enterprize. We should have been very much in the wrong had we opposed the efforts of any other Christian and civilizing nation to establish itself in parts of the earth which we ourselves had not occupied. There are few places suitable for European enterprise that we have not entered, and it would be selfish and narrow-minded and injurious to our own national interests were we to show undue jealousy of similar enterprize on the part of other European nations. A British company has secured the concession of trading facilities and administrative functions over a large part of the same coast, and they have not had the misfortune to fall into conflict with the natives to any considerable extent. They have formed good relations with the natives; they have won the confidence of the Arabs, and also of the tribes of the country, but I beg the House to remember that we are people of great experience of Oriental nations. We have had our misfortunes, we too have made mistakes, but we have acquired a certain knowledge of the best means of managing Eastern Princes and people, so that we are able now to avoid many of the accidents and misadventures that may happen when European agents attempt to embark in enterprizes in a country already peopled. The disturbance within the German sphere is a matter very much to be deplored, but I venture to think that the House will not consider it their duty or the duty of Her Majesty's Government to express an opinion as to the acts of German agents on that coast, or even of German forces. It is entirely beyond our sphere. We have no more right to criticize and comment, or offer our advice upon those proceedings, than foreign Powers have to give us their advice in our dealings in any sphere or regions in which Her Majesty's Government possesses influence or territory. We should resent it. If Her Majesty's Government possesses influence in the world, it is from keeping within our own rights and duties and not intruding ourselves upon the functions of other nations. But, while I say that, I also say that it is deeply to be regretted in the interest of all parties, in the interest of the friendly German nation, in the interest of the African tribes, in the interest of civilization, that there should have been such a collision with the natives within the sphere of German influence; but this matter arising in a part of the coast beyond our own sphere of operations on the coast is a totally different matter from our taking part jointly in the blockade of the coast with Germany. The German Government invited us to join them in blockading the coast, which was to a large extent in a state of insurrection, for the purpose of preventing the importation of arms and the exportation of slaves. The exportation of slaves is a practice which this country has laboured to put down now for three-quarters of a century, and I put it to the House that we should have done very wrong to have refused to join a great Power hand in hand to stop that exportation. The Member for West Edinburgh asked whether the Portuguese were parties to

the blockade. They were in a sense, because they complied with the invitation to join in the enterprize and undertake the surveillance of their own coast. They were not concerned in the operations on the Zanzibar coast because they have no concession from the Sultan; and as there is no war in their country it was not to be a blockade *jure gentium*. The French are not parties to the blockade; but the French have no immediate interest such as Germany and England have in that coast. By the admission of the French Government, we are able to take positive action against the import of arms and the export of slaves by carrying out an effective blockade on that coast, which could have been done in no other way. While the French are as much opposed to the slave trade as ourselves, they are jealous of the examination of their ships by men-of-war of other nations, and had Her Majesty's Government not established a blockade *jure gentium* on that coast, they would not have had the right to visit vessels flying the French flag, though possibly engaged in the slave trade; therefore there is in every way a great advantage to the objects in which all civilized nations have a part, particularly this country, by joining in the establishment of the blockade on the Zanzibar Coast. We have, too, by our joining in that action, taken up a position which enables us to safeguard the rights and status of the Sultan. I have said that, fortunately, in the British sphere of influence there has been no opposition of any importance, neither has there been any interruption of trade. On the contrary, trade has been steadily increasing, the relations with the British East African Company have been constantly improving, and I am sure, while we should be sorry to gain at the expense of any rivals and competitors, we have lost nothing in our sphere of influence by reason of the state of war which unhappily exists in the German sphere. I hope, therefore, that this British enterprize is tending towards a happy result, and is destined to add to the colonizing triumphs of this country, and to give an addition to the markets for the manufactures of the country. Something has been said about the state of affairs in Samoa. Papers are about to be presented on the subject which will give the proceedings at the Conference at Washington, and as that Conference is shortly to reassemble, the House will not desire to go largely into the state of affairs in Samoa. But here, as with reference to Zanzibar, it is right that I should point out that, while the two Governments of Germany and England act independently of each other as regards the immediate action of the separate Governments, we have an understanding with the German Government as to the best means of exercising European influence over the Native Government of that country in the time coming. It is manifest from the internal troubles which have existed for so many years in Samoa that its Government cannot stand alone, and Her Majesty's Government expressed the opinion at the Conference at Washington that it would be better that one Power should exercise influence there rather than that three Governments should act through their representatives, who have failed to produce any satisfactory result. We have had no difference with the United States on the matter, but they took a different view at Washington; consequently the Conference did not result then in any settlement, but the Government of the United States have discussed the matter with the German Government in the most friendly and frank manner, and I hope that when the Conference re-assembles it will be with the prospect of coming to a satisfactory conclusion. There were some remarks made by the hon. Member for Queen's County which I will not pass over entirely without remark, because they were to some extent of a mischievous tendency, The hon. Member has said that the negotiations carried on by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham for the settlement of the Fisheries Question have proved abortive on account of the dislike entertained towards the right hon. Gentleman by a part of the people of the American Republic. Undoubtedly, from certain causes, the Fisheries Treaty has not been ratified; but by means of the *modus vivendi* provided between the two Governments not a single Canadian or American vessel has been seized since the arrangement was in operation, and no trouble occurred last year in the fisheries of the Canadian Coast. This fact alone justifies the policy of Her Majesty's

Government in undertaking the negotiations, and is a tribute to the admirable way in which they were carried on by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The hon. Member has referred to the Sackville and Morier incidents. These are not matters that seriously disturb the relations of great countries. The Sackville incident has blown over, and we can afford to regard the comments which have rendered the incident of more importance than it would have otherwise acquired; and I am quite sure the relations between the great American Republic and our own nation will not be permanently injured by a trap laid for the British Minister, or by any attempt to fan the affair into undeserved importance by those who do not wish well to the good relations between the two countries. As to the affair in which the name of Her Majesty's Ambassador in St. Petersburg has been involved, I can only say that I do not think that there is anyone in this country who believes for a moment that that distinguished British servant would have been guilty of any act which was unworthy of his position, or of which he would have had cause to be ashamed. It is to be regretted that mischief-makers should have dragged his name forward in this undeserved manner; but it has not been necessary by any public action to clear it. The incident has passed by without any interruption of the good relations between those great countries which have so many common interests, and which are so concerned in the advancement of civilization and the preservation of European peace

MEMORANDUM OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

RELATING TO THE

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1889-90.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, March, 1889.

In the present year it is proposed to include in this Memorandum only a few details in explanation of the Estimates, and to reserve any general review of policy and progress during the past year, for a statement in the House of Commons.

The Estimates for 1888-9, including the Ordnance Factories' Vote, showed an anticipated expenditure of £13,710,700 for effective, and £3,027,600 for non-effective Services, making a total of £16,738,300.

For 1889-90, the Estimates show an expenditure of £17,335,900, of which £14,322,500 is for effective, and £3,013,400 for non-effective Services, being an increase on last year of £597,600.

It will be seen that the main cause of this increase is the provision made for certain Colonial garrisons, the falling off of Appropriations in Aid, but, above all, the necessity of pushing forward the re-armament of our Regular troops with weapons of the newest pattern.

The changes to be noticed in the various arms of the Service in the present Estimates are not very numerous. There is a total addition to the Establishment of 2,615 men.

Almost the whole of this increase has been occasioned by the necessity of strengthening Colonial garrisons, in view of the new armaments, either already sent out, or about to be shipped during the present year. A large addition is made, both of Infantry and Artillery, to the Garrison of Malta, besides the Militia regiment that we are encouraged to hope will be raised there. The principal other additions made are to some of our distant coaling stations; where, however, the policy is being steadily pursued of utilizing, as far as is prudent and possible, the service of Native auxiliaries.

It will be seen by the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting that the work of his department has been satisfactory during the past year. Fewer men were required than in 1887 8, and it is gratifying to be able to add that desertions were fewer in number by more than 1,000. During the coming year there will be a substantial increase to the Reserve, which will, it is hoped, reach 58,300, the highest point yet attained, with the prospect of improvement in future years.

The Militia is, I am sorry to say, 2,039 weaker in numbers than last year. In some districts this is to be accounted for by increased competition in recruiting, owing to the somewhat different class now admitted into the ranks of the Volunteers. In several cases where the deficiency in Establishment has been very marked, adjoining battalions have been amalgamated. In others the Establishments in unfavourable localities will be diminished in order to increase them in districts more favourable to recruiting. The percentage of loss by desertion and fraud continues to decrease, and the confidential reports upon the condition of Militia battalions are on the whole extremely satisfactory. Many

corps were trained last year under canvas in very wet weather, and the discipline displayed under this test was generally excellent. It is also satisfactory to be able to speak well of the officering of the Militia, which formerly caused great anxiety. It has continued to improve, although 211 Officers have been furnished to the Regular Army during the year. In accordance with a recommendation of the Select Committee on Army Estimates, the strength of the Permanent Staff has been very carefully considered, and a Quartermaster at each of the double Regimental Districts will be reduced. In future the status of the Paymaster and Orderly Room sergeants of Militia will be changed to that of Assistant Paymaster and Orderly Room sergeants. The decrease upon this Vote amounts to £25,000.

The Yeomanry is still suffering from agricultural depression, and shows a decrease of 304 men, but the efficiency of this branch of the Service is very favourably reported on. In the case of the Yeomanry, it has not been found possible to reduce the Permanent Staff without serious loss of efficiency, but several corps have been warned that they must be prepared for reduction of Permanent Staff or even disbandment should they not improve in numbers and attain a higher standard.

The annual returns of the Volunteers show a decrease in efficients of 1,366, and of enrolled men of 1,569. It will be remembered that in conceding to the Volunteers two years ago an addition to the Capitation Grant of 5s., I went beyond the recommendation of the Committee by requiring increased proficiency with the rifle as a condition of earning the whole grant. This requirement was received with gloomy forbodings by some Commanding Officers, but it is most satisfactory to be able to state that it has proved a complete success. In addition to this improvement in shooting, it may be said of the Volunteer Force at large, that it evinces each year a greater readiness to accept the reality of its responsibility, and to advance in discipline and military efficiency.

Many of the Officers have shown marked zeal in qualifying themselves for usefulness in the field; nor is the deficiency in the number of Officers—to which frequent allusion is made—worse than formerly. The falling off of local subscriptions towards the maintenance of the Volunteer Force has tended to throw increased expense upon the Officers, and the daily-improving efficiency of the force generally requires them to devote more time to their duties than was the case a few years ago. Cyclist Sections have been formed in many corps, and several cyclist manœuvres were organised under military supervision. Mounted Infantry Sections and machine guns have also been added to several corps.

The increase upon the Vote is £22,000, which is due to the grants to the Volunteer Artillery in respect of the guns recently issued to them, to the larger number of greatcoats for which grants are required, and to the additional Submarine Miners recently raised.

A large decrease has resulted on Vote 1 by the experimental adoption of the system of Station, instead of Regimental, Paymasters. If this can be fully carried out, it will enable a reduction of some 80 Paymasters to be made. The net saving by these changes will amount to £25,000 a year, in addition to the retired pay of the 80 Paymasters.

Votes 3 and 4, as to which recommendations were made by the Select Committee on Army Estimates, have undergone complete revision. In the case of military prisons, however, the changes adopted vary somewhat from those recommended by the Committee. It was found that by closing all the military prisons which were suggested, and providing for Provost prisons in substitution for them, the saving in cost would be much smaller than was then anticipated, owing to the increased charge for conveyance and for the staff of Provost prisons. It has, however, been found possible to make a much greater economy by largely reducing the cost of the Establishment of these military prisons, although only two more of them will be altogether closed.

The Vote for Medical Establishments (Vote 4) begins to show the effect of the measures adopted last year, which were approved by the Select Committee, and have now been carried further. The Establishment has been reduced by 52 Officers, and by utilizing the services of 25 additional retired Medical Officers at home, the growth of the Retired Pay Vote has been checked, and a large

reduction will eventually be effected in the Pension List, although the full result of this step cannot be apparent for some years. A Royal Warrant has been issued, giving to the junior Medical Officers of the Guards in the future their turn of foreign service. And lastly, in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, an inquiry, presided over by the Earl of Camperdown, is taking place into the status, and scale of remuneration and of pension now in force for Medical Officers, both of the Army and Navy. No admissions to the department will take place until the completion of this investigation.

The Vote for provisions is increased by £96,000. A rise in the price of the ration, which had been steadily falling for 10 years past, accounts for £49,000. The additional force absorbes £17,000, and provision has also been made for extra transport animals in South Africa.

The Vote for Warlike Stores and Armaments shows an increase of £394,000. I reserve, for the present, a full explanation of the many subject arising upon this Vote; but it may be pointed out that the increase is mainly due to the provision of the new magazine rifle and ammunition, and to the re-arming of the Royal Artillery with the 12-pr. gun.

An amount of £268,000 is taken for machine and quick-firing guns, and for ammunition in connection with the Imperial Defence Loan. But that service entails an additional charge upon Vote 9 for the transport of guns and material at home and abroad, and of £15,000, under Vote 15, for interest upon the sums to be borrowed during the first two years.

The Works Vote is swollen by £72,000, of which no less than £54,200 is due to the falling off of Appropriations in Aid, or, in other words, of the proceeds of sales of land.

A sum of £10,000 is taken for services in connection with the Royal Barracks at Dublin, the sanitary condition of which has attracted our very serious attention. But the general question of Barracks, to which attention was called by the Committee on the Army Estimates, together with some other important subjects arising out of this Vote, is reserved for further explanation in the House of Commons.

The growth of the War Office Vote [Vote 16] has been checked during the last three years, although the annual increments of pay amount to about £3,000. Heavy additional work has also been thrown upon the Office by the Imperial Defence Loan, by the substitution of the monthly for the half-yearly system of accounts. and by the endeavour to bring up to date the examination of the current accoonts. A considerable increase of staff has, however, been avoided by throwing on the Paymasters of Stations the duty of the primary audit of the Regimental Accounts, and leaving to the War Office a test audit only.

Upon the Non-Effective Votes there is a net saving of £14,200, due to decreased pay mentsby the Purchase Commissioners and a reduction in the sum required for out-pensions. The continued increase of retired pay in the Medical Department has been checked. The reduction in the General Officers' List, a scheme for which is in preparation, will also produce a considerable ultimate saving; on the other hand there is an increase of £4,900 in consequence of the number of Lieutenant-Colonels who have gone to half-pay on completing their terms of command.

EDWARD STANHOPE.

27th February, 1889.

STATEMENT OF FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY,

EXPLANATORY OF

THE NAVY ESTIMATES, 1889-90.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

Introductory Remarks.

The full *vivâ voce* statement which I shall have to make in explanation of the whole scheme of shipbuilding for the future, with its attendant consequences, will anticipate much of what would otherwise have been dwelt upon in this memorandum, which is now rather of the nature of a summary than an exposition of the expenditure contained in the Navy Estimates 1889-90.

The expenditure is estimated to be £602,600 in excess of that voted last year. The increases are mainly in the "Shipbuilding," "Manning" and "New Works" Votes; and the decrease in the Vote for Naval Ordnance. A short explanation of the causes of these variations is appended, as well as an account of the work done in 1888-89, and that proposed to be done in 1889-90.

SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME.

Progress of New Construction (Contract) in 1888-89.

The anticipations expressed in my Statement of February 1888 as to the progress to be made in New Construction during 1888-89 have been realised for the most part, and in some cases surpassed.

In a few instances the performance has fallen short of what was originally hoped for; but there have been special circumstances to account for the difference.

The completion for sea of the *Victoria* and *Sans Pareil* after their delivery by the Contractors has been effected, as it was feared it might be, by the dates of delivery of the 110-ton turret guns. Both ships are, however, now fully in hand, and it is expected that the *Victoria* will be ready for Commission (as flagship in the Mediterranean) in the course of two or three months.

The protected cruiser *Magicienne* has been delivered by the Contractors, and is about to proceed on her steam trials. Her sister ship, the *Marathon*, is nearly ready for delivery.

The conclusion of a Contract for the *Blenheim* was purposely delayed, until September 1888, for reasons that need not here be given; and this fact, together with the difficulty of obtaining an adequate supply of steel materials in consequence of the great demand for mercantile shipbuilding, acoounts for the expenditure on that ship having fallen short of what was originally proposed.

Similar difficulties in obtaining materials have been experienced by the Contractors for the *Bellona* and the seven vessels for Australasian service, but it is hoped that these difficulties have now been surmounted, and that in subsequent stages of the work lost ground will be recovered.

Two composite gunboats, the *Sparrow* and *Thrush*, complete the list of armed vessels building by contract. They are to be delivered early in the next financial year.

Besides these armed vessels, there have been in progress in private yards a considerable number of coaling craft, designed in accordance with the recommendations of a Special Committee appointed to consider the arrangements suitable for coaling the Fleet.

A new type of boat has also been designed for the purpose of being carried on board large warships and employed in mining operations or in coaling. The first example of the type is now undergoing trial, and, if successful, it is proposed to add to the number in the coming financial year.

Six first class and ten second class torpedo boats have been ordered during 1888-89 for Naval Service, and are considerably advanced.

The first class torpedo boats are 130 feet long, the guaranteed speed, when fully loaded, is 22½ knots, and they are to carry an armament of 3-pr. quick-firers as well as three torpedo tubes.

The second class boats are of an improved type obtained as the result of a competition between the firms most experienced in this class of work. They are 60 feet long, have a guaranteed speed of 16 knots, and are to carry a machine gun as well as two torpedo dischargers.

In addition to these torpedo boats the Admiralty have advised and assisted the India Office in the construction of seven first class torpedo boats, which are now practically complete and in course of being dispatched to India.

DESCRIPTION OF NEW DESIGNS.

The *first-class battle ships* to be laid down in 1889-90 include two types: one armed on the turret system, and the other on the barbette system. It is proposed to build one of the former and the remainder of the latter type.

They are to be superior in speed and auxilary armament to all preceeding battle ships of the Royal Navy; and will surpass them all in displacement.

Their principal dimensions are:—

Length	380 feet.
Breadth	75 ,,
Displacement (about)	14,150 tons.

Speed on measured mile:—

Forced draught (about)	17½ knots.
Natural ,, ,, ...	16 ,,

Coal endurance:—

Speed of 10 knots (about)	5,000 ,,
,, 16 ,, ,, ...	1,800 to 2,000 knots.

The armament of each ship will include:—

4 13½-in. 67-ton guns in two turrets or barbettes.
10 6-in. 5-ton guns, broadside.
18 to 24 6-pr. and 3-pr. quick-firers.
5 torpedo tubes (above water).
2 ,, ,, (submerged).

The disposition of the armament has been most exhaustively considered. It has been decided as follows:—

To adopt an arrangement (in plan) similar to that carried out in the *Trafalgar* and *Admiral* classes.

To place each pair of heavy guns in a separate armoured enclosure, situated about 50 or 60 feet from the bow and stern.

To carry the 6-inch guns and smaller quick-firers chiefly in a long central battery, situated between the heavy gun stations.

The armour protection of the hull proper includes two principal features:—

(1) A belt, 8½ feet broad, extending over two-thirds of the length of the vessel, and having a maximum thickness of 18-inch armour.

Transverse armoured bulkheads complete the belt, a 3-inch steel deck is fitted above it, and a strong protective underwater deck completes the protection before and abaft the belt.

(2) The broadside above the thick belt is protected, to the height of about 9½ feet above water over a considerable portion of the length, by 5-inch armour. Screen bulkheads, similarly armoured, enclose the central battery.

The protection of the heavy guns consists of 18-inch armour on the turrets and 17-inch on the redoubts protecting the turret-bases, &c. In the barbette ships the armour on the barbettes is 17-inch.

The protection of the guns and their crews in the auxiliary armament, as well as the ammunition supply, have been carefully arranged for, in view of the development of high explosives and quick-firing guns.

The turret and barbette designs are identical in nearly all the above-mentioned features. The essential differences between them are—

(1) That the freeboard at the ends of the barbette ship is 18 feet, as against 11¼ feet in the turret ship.

(2) That the height of the heavy guns above water is 23 feet in the barbette ship, as against 17 feet in the turret ship.

The *second-class ironclads* will be reproductions on a smaller scale of the first-class barbette ironclads, being in speed and coal endurance their equal, but carrying a somewhat lighter armament, and armour of less thickness. Their displacement will be about 9,000 tons.

The *first-class protected cruisers* which are to be commenced have been designed to carry an armament practically identical with that of the *Blake* and *Blenheim* (of which a full description was given last year); but they are to be of considerably less size and cost, to steam at a somewhat lower speed, and to have a smaller coal-endurance than the *Blake* and *Blenheim*, although they will compare very favourably in these respects with any cruisers building for foreign Navies.

Their dimensions are—

Length	360 feet.
Breadth	60 ,,
Displacement (about)	7,350 tons.
Speed on measured mile	20 knots.
,, at sea (continuous steaming)	18 ,,

Radius of action—

Speed of 10 knots (about)	10,000 ,,
,, 18 ,, ,,	2,800 ,,

Armament:—

2 9·2-in. (22-ton) bow and stern chasers.
10 6-in. (5-ton) do. do and broadside.
12 6-pr. quick-firers.
4 Torpedo tubes.

The protective deck, extending throughout the length, will have a maximum thickness of 5 inches of steel.

Careful consideration was given to the question of the best system of protecting these vessels, their guns and guns' crews, before the arrangements approved were finally decided. The use of a very strong protective deck over the vitals, in association with certain novel arrangements for protecting the guns and their crews from shell-fire, was preferred to alternative plans in which the broadsides, to a certain extent, were protected by comparatively thin vertical armour. Special care has also been bestowed upon the protection of the ammunition during its passage from the magazines to the guns, and unusual facilities have been provided for the transport of the ammunition.

Some of the vessels of this type will be wood-sheathed and coppered in order to adapt them for distant service on stations where docks will not be available, at least in war time. This will add somewhat to the displacements given above, and cause a small reduction of the measured mile speed.

The *second class Cruisers*, of which it is proposed to construct a large number, may be described as enlarged *Medeas*. In protection, engine power, speed, and coal supply they are practically reproductions of the *Medea* class. They are more heavily armed than the *Medea*, 35 feet longer, and of about 600 tons greater displacement.

The principal dimensions, &c., are:—

Length	300 feet.
Breadth	43 ,,
Displacement (about)	3,400 tons.
Speed on measured mile	20 knots.
,, at sea (continuous steaming)	18 ,,

Radius of action:—

Speed of 10 knots (about)	8,000 knots.
,, 18 ,, ,,	1,000 ,,
,, 16 ,, ,,	2,000 ,,

Armament:—

2 6-inch (5-ton) bow and stern chasers.
6 4·7-inch quick-firers, broadside.
9 6-pounders and 3-pounders.
4 Torpedo tubes.

Protective deck: maximum thickness (on slopes) 2-inch steel on horizontal portions, 1-inch.

It is proposed to wood-sheath and copper the bottoms of a large proportion of these vessels, which will involve an increase of about 200 tons in the displacement given above, and a reduction of about one-quarter of a knot in the measured mile speed.

Four *protected Cruisers* of the *Pandora* class are to be laid down in the Dockyards. They are to be built from the same design as the five Cruisers for Australasian service described in my Statement of last year.

A description of the *Sharpshooter* class (*Torpedo gunboats*) appeared in the same Statement. The first vessel of the class is now nearly complete, and about to enter upon her steam trials, so that it will shortly be possible to decide, as the result of experience, whether any changes are desirable in future vessels of the class.

Eleven vessels for the Royal Navy and two for India are now building from the *Sharpshooter* design; and it is proposed to lay down four more Torpedo gunboats in the Dockyards in 1889-90.

DOCKYARD ADMINISTRATION.

It was anticipated, in framing the Estimates for 1888-89, that the 23 ships mentioned in the programme of last year would be completed and passed into the 1st class Reserve by the 31st March 1889, and this would, without doubt, have been done as far as the armoured ships are concerned but for the delay in the delivery of their main armament.

The Dockyard work is complete on all these vessels, except *Camperdown*, *Anson*, and *Aurora*, where there is but very little left to be done, and that little is dependent on the receipt of guns.

The *Trafalgar* might be completed by the end of June next, but her last gun will not be delivered until 31st August 1889. If it had not been for this, and also for delays of materials for *Trafalgar's* turret roller paths, the cost of

building would be less than is now expected. A reduction of £85,000 for labour, and £15,000 for material has, however, been made on her original building estimate.

It is proposed to commence building in the Dockyards during the present financial year the following 20 ships, viz:—

4 Battle Ships, 1st class.
1 ,, 2nd ,,
3 Protected Cruisers, 1st class.
2 ,, ,, 2nd ,,
4 Cruisers (Pandoras).
6 Torpedo Gunboats (Sharpshooter class).

To enable this new work to be begun, and to complete 26 out of the 30 ships now building, as well as push on the repairs and reconstructions above mentioned the Vote for Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, &c. (Vote 8) has been increased by £615,900. The sum of £202,465 is the net increase on that part of this expenditure, as detailed in Vote B appended to the Estimates.

A special order has been issued during the year, by which a higher rate of speed than that known "as economical speed," has been directed for the future to be periodically maintained by H.M. Ships when making passages. The reasons for and objects of this order are explained in the Circular Letter in the Appendix.

NAVAL ORDNANCE.

The transfer to Naval Votes of the cost of Naval Ordnance has been associated during the past year with the difficulties which the assumption of new duties and responsibilities generally entails. In this instance they have been aggravated by the necessity of the Admiralty employing as their agents the very Department with whom they were not always in accord upon questions where the interests of the Army and Navy where not identical.

Considering the controversial nature of the points to be settled and the financial bearing upon the expenditure of the two departments by the division of the stores hitherto held in common, the work done has been remarkable. In future years, now that the ground has been cleared, there is little likelihood of a recurrence of these kinds of questions, which have now been decided once for all.

The Estimates as submitted by the Dockyard Officers for items of incidental charges were reduced by more that £30,000, but it appears, from the latest returns of actual expenditure, that a saving may be expected at the end of the year upon the approved Estimates as reduced.

Still further reductions have been made in Estimates of this class for 1889-90, and there is good reason to hope, that in a short time, the incidential expenditure will be brought down to a reasonable percentage upon the direct charges.

The number of men employed on board the various tugs and harbour craft have been considerably reduced without loss of efficiency. They swelled the incidental expenditure and had little to do, so that action in this direction was urgently needed.

The Cost Account System has worked fairly well during the year, and has given us returns of expenditure which will be useful in checking the value of work done, and in providing reliable data for estimating purposes in the future.

An account of expenditure upon alterations and additions separate from that upon repairs is about to be commenced for "Minotaur" and "Thunderer." After this has been started and tried in practice, it may be iound possible to extend the system to all ships upon which alterations and additions are ordered to be carried out, and which are likely to cost over £200.

The cost of repairs, alterations, and additions to the vessels which took part in the Summer Manœuvres will be heavier than was anticipated when

the Estimates for the current year were framed, but the excess is due to numerous alterations and additions proposed to be carried out in the various ships.

The "Nile," whose original estimate has been reduced by £80,000 for labour, and £10,000 for material, has been advanced during the year to such an extent as to admit, if necessary, of her completion in 1889-90.

Substantial reductions have been made in the previous estimates for building "Barrosa" (£3,000 for labour), "Anson" (£1,800 labour and £10,000 for material), "Howe" (£700 for labour and £3,300 material) and "Beagle" (£2,000 labour and material).

Ships repaired or repairing for recommission :—

Ship.	Service for which Repaired.	Cost of Repairs. (Dockyard.)	Amount less than that taken in the Estimates (Approximate).
		£	£
"Penelope"	Cape of Good Hope	11,757	1,000
"Tyne"	Troop service	6,105	4,800
"Cleopatra"	Reliefs	31,500	4,000
"Champion"	Do.	(Approximate.) 30,500	4,400
"Victory"	Guardship	8,260	1,740

The work of re-engining "Superb" and "Thunderer" has been commenced, and will be completed next year. The building of a superstructure and carrying out repairs to "Hydra" and "Cyclops" will be completed this year. The repair of "Triumph," "Achilles," "Minotaur," "Nelson," and "Audacious," will be completed during the forthcoming financial year, and the reconstruction of the "Rupert" and "Devastation" will be well advanced.

The amount of the deficiencies of Ordnance Stores for Naval Service has now been ascertained, and, although they are serious, it is hoped they may be made up gradually in the course of the next three years, without in the meantime running any very great risk, as, by means of the increased plant recently put up by the Private Trade, ammunition for the smaller natures of guns could be produced very quickly in the event of an emergency, whilst as regards projectiles of the heavier natures, which take a long time to make, arrangements have been made for ordering these in larger proportions at once.

As is well-known, there has been very great delay in completing ships with guns. This delay was due to the faulty principle which was adopted in the design of these guns, viz., that of placing liners in the bores; these liners, when the guns were proved, cracked, and very considerable delay was caused before the guns were repaired and made efficient for issue to the Fleet. These difficulties, it is believed, have now been got over, and the War Office are of opinion that the block as regards ships of the Admiral Class and the belted cruisers will be removed by June, that is, in sufficient time to admit of all the ships otherwise ready taking part in the Summer Manœuvres. It is believed that no further difficulties or delays need be anticipated in the future delivery of guns, as in the gun designs now approved, the features which have led to the failures above referred to have been eliminated.

With reference to the new Shipbuilding Programme, the whole of the requirements for the large guns (that is, those taking more than a year to manufacture) have been made known to the War Office, and from reliable information which has been received and verified by personal inquiries, there seems to be no doubt, in view of the simpler form of gun designs now adopted, and of the larger experi-

ence and greatly increased plant of the private manufacturers, that the guns will be ready in ample time for the ships requiring them.

The 4·7-inch Quick-firing Gun has been brought into use since the date of my last Annual Statement, and all the anticipations have been fully realized as to the very great advantages possessed by this type of gun, more especially in resisting the attacks of torpedo vessels, and in enabling more accurate practice to be made when ships are moving at great speed. Practice from slow-firing guns under such conditions must be most uncertain on account of the very great alteration in distance between the rounds.

During the year ending 31st December 1888, 160 new Breech Loading Guns have been completed for the Navy, including one 16¼-inch 111-ton gun, 6 13½-inch 68-ton, 9 12-inch 45-ton, and 6 9·2-inch 22-ton guns. During the same period 262 14-inch Whitehead Torpedoes have been manufactured and issued for Naval Service.

EXPERIMENTS IN 1888-9.

A Special Committee has been appointed by the War Office to deal with the question of High Explosives; and experiments are also in progress with several descriptions of smokeless powder for use with quick-firing guns. The experiments against the *Resistance* with shells charged with high explosives will also now be shortly completed, and will determine several important points in reference to Armament and Ammunition, besides affording the required information as to the most suitable form of defence to be adopted.

The experiments on armour-plating, mentioned in my Statement last year, have been carried out successfully, valuable information having been obtained as to the relative qualities of steel-faced and steel armour when attacked by modern guns and projectiles.

Experiments with submerged torpedo discharges in vessels of high speed have been continued; and many of the special difficulties incidental to that method of discharge have been overcome.

The reduction of this Vote to £1,463,000 has been possible by the transfer to another fund of the cost of armament of the new ships which it is proposed to build by contract.

NEW WORKS.

No new works of great importance were commenced during 1888-89, but the undermentioned will be practically completed before the end of the financial year:—

Haulbowline (Extension) ..	The Caissons are in place.
Chatham Dockyard	New Foundry.
Gibraltar	Accommodation for Torpedo Boats.
Portsmouth	Torpedo Range.
	Barracks for 400 men (commenced 1889).

The Estimate of Vote 10 for 1889-90 amounts to £451,000, being £74,700 more than that for 1888-89.

The difference is caused chiefly by the provision for—

Improved Coaling Arrangements	£50,000
Dredging Medway	13,000
Malta Extension—Caissons, &c.	11,700
	£74,700

The charges for Staff have been reduced, and also those for Repairs and Maintenance.

The form of the Estimate has, in compliance with the wish of the Public Accounts Committee, been changed so as to resemble as much as possible that of the Army Works Estimate.

Provision is made for the commencement of works to facilitate coaling at—

Portland	Jetty
Portsmouth	Railways
Keyham	Pier, &c.

The only other large work to be commenced during 1889-90 is the important dredging of the Medway to allow of the largest men-of-war passing down the river at any high tide, the remainder of the new barracks on Whale Island, which will enable old hulks—very expensive to repair—to be given up, and the continuation of the reconstruction of the large trooping jetty at Portsmouth Dockyard.

The large extension works at Portsmouth are nearly at an end, and those at Malta are proceeding vigorously.

PERSONNEL.

The offices of Chaplain of the Fleet and of Inspector of Naval Schools have been combined, and the arrangement seems to work satisfactorily.

The arrangements affecting instruction of Engineer students, referred to in last year's Statement, have been completed. The training is now carried on at Davenport alone. The students have been made subordinate officers of the Royal Navy. The period of instruction is to be reduced to five (and in some cases four) years. Only those who attain a certain standard at the final Examination will be allowed a period of further study at the Royal Naval College; the remainder will commence service afloat at once.

The direct entry of Assistant Engineers at the Royal Naval College will commence in 1890.

It has been found necessary to increase the number of Engine-room Ratings by the following numbers:—

125 Chief or Engine-room Artificers.
780 Leading Stokers or Stokers.

Besides these numbers 200 Stokers have been added to the Coast Guard; though this addition to the Coast Guard will hardly be attained in the coming year, as only men of specified service and very good character are appointed.

Complaints have been made as to the quality of the Stokers of the 2nd Class. The increase which it has been found necessary to make in this class has led to numerous entries, and as many of the men are rather young, efforts are being made to obtain men of better physique.

The chief increases in other ratings are—

Subordinate Officers..	280
Seamen class, Men and Boys ..	390
Artificers	100
Marines	1,100

including in the Marines men added to the Corps on account of duties to be performed by it as Buglers, Lamptrimmers, &c., in lieu of non-combatant ratings.

Arrangements have been made for the gradual reduction of Artificer and Stoker Pensioners in the Steam Reserves, whose places will be supplied by Active Service men. The reduction is gradual, owing to the desire not to deal hardly with men who do their Harbour work well, though rather old for sea service, if called on in an emergency,

The pay of the Signal Class has been improved, to put them on an equality with other Seamen class ratings, who can attain the higher Gunnery qualifications from which they are debarred.

The number of Signal ratings borne in Ships will be increased, and provision has been made for training more Signal Boys.

It is also intended to establish a School for higher training, and instruction given to all boys whilst in their Training Ships will be increased.

Progress has been made in reducing some of the non-combatant ratings which are to disappear entirely, or almost so.

These include—

Plumber's Crew.
Tinsmith.
Lamptrimmer.
Tailor.
Shoemaker.
Barber.

Besides these, in accordance with recommendations of the Ratings Committee or previous decisions, the following ratings will be abolished :—

Captain of the Hold.
2nd Captain of the Hold.
Ordinary 2nd Class.
Yeoman of Store Room.
Ropemaker.
Sailmaker's Crew.
Lithographer.

Schoolmasters are to be withdrawn from all but Boys' Training Ships, and the numbers will be considerably reduced. Those selected for the new establishment will receive improved pay and pension. The number of Schoolmasters of the Royal Marines has been reduced, owing to abolition of compulsory *School* after leaving the Depôt.

The Carpenter class will be reduced in number by the gradual abolition of

Unskilled { Carpenter's Mates.
Shipwright.
Caulkers.
Caulker's Mate.
Carpenter's Crew.

Skilled Shipwrights being substituted for the last in proportion of 2 to 3. It is estimated that 326 non-combatants can thus be reduced. Skilled Leading Shipwright, 2nd Class Petty Officer, will be introduced.

The previous compulsory training of seamen gunners in Torpedo duties has been made optional, and restricted to men who take 1st class in Gunnery.

Gymnastic instruction has been established in mastless ships.

These changes and the increase to the number voted last year have caused a rise in Votes 1 and 2 of £275,300, as compared with the estimate of the preceding year. Of this amount, £78,900 is contained in a new Vote, No. 14, which deals with half-pay as a separate item. Half-pay in the previous year was contained in a subhead of Vote 1.

ROYAL NAVAL RESERVES.

Honorary Commissions as Commander and Chief Engineer will be conferred, in certain cases, on Marine Superintendents and Engineer Superintendents of large Ship Companies.

A larger number of Officers will be admitted for the year's training in the Royal Navy.

It is proposed to relax the rules as to appointment of Sub-Lieutenants, with the view of giving more Commissions to Officers of large Mail Lines, who are at present under some disadvantage, as their advancement in the service in which they are employed is rather slow.

ROYAL MARINE FORCES.

Notwithstanding the heavy demands made upon Marine Headquarters to meet the additional requirements of the Fleet, the various drills and courses of instruction have been kept up, and the efficiency of the Corps fully maintained.

Increased attention has been paid especially to Naval Gun Drill training, and much improvement effected in the Armaments of the Gun Drill Batteries.

Classes for military training of Officers and men, and Reconnaissance and Field Sketching Classes for Non-commissioned Officers, have been established. Regular classes of Officers for the study and practice of the War Game have also been introduced at each Divisional headquarters with good results.

Discipline has been well maintained. Convictions by Courts Martial have been for many years steadily on the decrease, and in spite of the drain on the Corps by the facilities freely offered to all ranks to take their discharge and to be transferred to the Navy, Army, and Auxiliary Forces, the Marines find no difficulty in enlisting a most desirable class of recruits, which speaks well for the popularity of the Corps.

In view of the growing demands of the Navy and the adaptability of the Non-commissioned Officers and Men of the Marines to fulfil many duties on board ship hitherto performed by non-combatants, it has been considered advisable to increase the strength of the Corps from 12,900 to 14,000—the increase going to the Infantry branch.

During the mobilization of the Fleet, the various detachments were embarked with readiness and despatch.

GEORGE HAMILTON.

4*th March*, 1889.

NAVY.

NAVY SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME, 1889-90.

MEMORANDUM
EXPLANATORY OF FINANCIAL PROPOSALS.

(PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT BY HER MAJESTY'S COMMAND.)

1. The total estimated cost of the 70 vessels to be built under the New Programme is £21,500,000, including armament and all warlike stores, with the necessary reserves. Thirty-eight of the vessels will be built in Her Majesty's Dockyards at an estimated cost of £8,650,000 for Hulls, Machinery, &c., and £2,850,000 for Armament, all provided under the ordinary Estimates. The remaining 32 vessels are to be built by contract, at an estimated cost of £10,000,000, including armament, &c., to be paid for out of the proposed Naval Defence Account.

2. It is proposed to provide the funds to defray the cost of the above in the following manner: The increase in the total amount proposed to be voted for Naval purposes in the ordinary Estimates of 1889-90 over the Estimates for 1888-89, is £602,600; this it is assumed will be continued in each of the four succeeding years.

3. In addition to the increased annual provision thus made in the Navy Estimates, it is proposed to provide a further sum of £10,000,000 from a Naval Defence Account, payable in seven annual instalments of £1,428,000 each, making, with the £602,000 already mentioned, an increase in the annual charge for Naval purposes of £2,030,000. The Treasury are to be empowered, under the Bill creating the fund, to make advances in anticipation of the annual instalments, charging Navy Funds for interest thereon.

4. Vote 8, which includes, besides Shipbuilding and Repairs, the Maintenance of the Fleet in Sea Stores and Coal, together with the cost of the Dockyards at Home and Abroad, amounts to £4,659,000. In this amount an expenditure of £2,650,000, excluding incidental charges, is provided for the special purpose of constructing and completing the vessels now in process of construction as well as those to be laid down under the New Programme in the Dockyards, except only as regards their Armament and Warlike Stores.

5. Vote 9, for Ordnance and Warlike Stores, amounts to £1,463,500, and includes the amount requisite for the equipment of the vessels built out of the funds provided under Vote 8.

6. The following Tables show the anticipated Annual Expenditure on the Programme, together with the provision to meet the same, on the assumption that the Estimates for Votes 8 and 9 remain unchanged:—

Thirty-eight Ships intended by the New Programme to be Built in Her Majesty's Dockyards, the Cost of which is to be included in the Ordinary Estimates.

——	1889-90.	1890-91.	1891-92.	1892-93.	1893-94.	TOTAL.
Vote 8.	£	£	£	£	£	£
Amount appropriated to New Construction	2,650,000	2,650,000	2,650,000	2,650,000	2,650,000	
Less,—Amount required to complete Ships in progress ...	1,290,000	256,000	—	—	—	
Amount available for New Programme ...	1,360,000	2,394,000	2,650,000	2,650,000	2,650,000	
Vote 9.						
Ordnance Amount appropriated for Armaments of New Vessels	450,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	
Total	1,810,000	2,994,000	3,250,000	3,250,000	3,250,000	= 14,554,000
Estimated Expenditure on New Programme, including Ordnance and Warlike Stores	1,810,000	2,940,000	3,160,000	2,250,000	1,340,000	= 11,500,000
					Difference	£3,054,000

The difference between the amounts available for New Construction, &c., viz., £14,554,000, and the sums required to complete the New Programme, viz., £11,500,000 can be either utilised in laying down New Vessels, or in reducing the Estimates for the years 1892-93, 1893-94.

Thirty-two Ships included in the New Programme to be Constructed by Contract and paid for out of the Naval Defence Account.

——	1889-90.	1890-91.	1891-92.	1892-93.	1893-94.	1894-95.	1895-96.	TOTAL.
Amount available out of the proposed Naval Defence Account ...	£ 1,428,000	£ 1,428,000	£ 1,428,000	£ 1,428,000	£ 1,428,000	£ 1,428,000	£ 1,432,000	£ 10,000,000
Estimated Expenditure ...	2,845,000	4,415,000	1,900,900	740,000	100,000	—	—	10,000,000

The Excess Expenditure in some years over the instalment payable from the Naval Defence Account will, as already explained, be met by Temporary Advances out of the Consolidated Fund, the interest thereon being charged to the ordinary Navy Estimates.

8 March, 1889. ARTHUR B. FORWOOD.

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VOLUME CCCXXXIII.

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